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The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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Talks on Criticism

V.

We Asked for Bread—

THIS talk of plots and characters, themes and ideas, new technique and old, is useful enough but seldom touches the heart of things. Of course we read for information and must be truly informed, and we read for amusement and must be competently diverted, but that hardly raises the question of literary satisfaction! A story is more than a plot, forgotten by next week; a poem is more than an idea, which a radio could supply? Readers think they carry away from books such facts as boys pour out on examination papers—a collection of miscellaneous junk floating on the mind's mill-dam soon to go over the crest—but surely what a good reader essentially acquires from literature is not that, nor does it resemble the analyses and description which we call a review. If "Pickwick" were only the adventures of Mr. Pickwick and "As You Like It" the pastoral story of Rosalind and "Rouge et Noir" Stendhal's idea of the love affairs of a tutor, then the best books would be the most circumstantial, with the most facts in them.

It is excessively difficult to say what a good reader most poignantly gets from a good book, but one real return from an ardent perusal is a confident assurance against change. It is the thrill of recognition that determines good reading. One chapter of a novel, one paragraph of history, one line of a poem, may intensify self by extending it. Those loveliest eighteenth century lines in Collins's "Ode to Evening"—

> And hears their simple bell, and marks o'er all
> Thy dewy fingers draw
> The gradual dusky veil—

are Evening articulate and eternal. It is not the play of "Antony and Cleopatra" that one remembers, but a scene, a line, a voiced emotion—that is the play for him. Stories live in the mind by the warmth of a moment when the book lifts the reader to a recognized experience—everything else is mechanical recollection. Those much ridiculed hungry ones who ask at a library desk for the book where the mother was bitten by a snake, are better readers than the reviewers—they know a book's climax if not what it is about. If that which is really yours in your library should be detached by strong magnetic love from the shelves, there would be a storm of paper fragments—only the best books would yield more than a page or two. The mind keeps perfunctorily far more of literature than is literary for the individual in any real sense. No one has ever published an anthology of Living Moments in Literature, for no one can make one except for himself, and not for himself if he knows too much conventionally of what could be got or ought to be got from books.

Apparently what we unconsciously seek in literature is some conviction of the humanity of man. Bergson, in his famous essay, tried to prove that laughter was engendered by the mechanical actions of a being not intended to be a machine. His definition of humor was too narrow, but by extending it one gets a satisfying insight into the nature of literature. We are mechanical, of course, in most of our relations, mechanical in conventional love, mechanical in the dull routine of dull living, mechanical when accepting a round of days in repetitive experience. That machine our brain and that machine our body are always threatening to equate man with the true machines which act by simple cause to simple effect. Against this horror of machine life sinking away from emotion, away from hope into drabness where men and women react in a haze of dulness, like oxen ploughing, wheels turning, tools rising and falling, mankind has always struggled. It is the eternal human problem, so vast and undramatic that few speak of it, fewer write of it. Old age used to be heavy with such threats. The industrial era has new methods of mechanizing men and women down to their souls. If hell is to be conceived of in modern terms, this will be it.

And therefore the enduring solace of literature is its humanity. The ass of Apuleius frisking his tail while he eats rose leaves is a guarantee of puckishness over two thousand years. That chapter in which Gargantua lives a typical day so full of laughter, wine, kissing, games, and repartee that mechanic dulness is pushed back into the incredible, is a cocktail to the imagination. The hard wit of Molière, those sudden bursts of Shakespeare where beauty rises dizzily, that naughty twinkle of Voltaire's French, Rousseau's bombast suddenly capturing a truth of the world, Wordsworth, when his lines

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Sonnet

(Written at the "Cock" Tavern on the fly-leaf of a book of verses)

By LEONARD BACON

THE plump head-waiter of the "Cock" is gone
From this sad England that has suffered change.
Stilled the Victorians' choral unison
And voices sing now of less manly range.

Only the lute twangs where the violin
Ran the whole gamut, or orchestral sound
Expressed the passion that was crushed within
The hearts of men whom the true laurel crowned.

The form and pressure of an empty style,
And preciosity of thought and verse,
And naïveté that thinks that it is guile
Is all that this sad poet can rehearse,

Who shams a passion that is all a fiction,
And bellows to the world a feigned conviction.

This Week

"Man Possessed."
Reviewed by *O. W. Firkins.*
"Gritney People."
Reviewed by *Julia Peterkin.*
Reinhardt Plays.
Reviewed by *Oliver M. Sayler.*
"Mostly Mississippi" and "Father Mississippi."
Reviewed by *Bernard De Voto.*
"Eden."
Reviewed by *Grace Frank.*
"The Place Called Dagon."
Reviewed by *Mary Ellen Chase.*
"D. L. Moody."
Reviewed by *Allan Nevins.*
Mlle. de Sombreuil.
By *Christopher Morley.*

Next Week, or Later

The Detective Story.
By *William Rose Benét.*

The Case of Julien Green

By ABEL CHEVALLEY

WITHIN the same year (1926-1927) two novels signed Julien Green, "Mont Cinère" (published in English as "Avarice House"*) and "Adrienne Mesurat" were successively published in Paris, by the old and renowned Librairie Plon. Their author's name was quite unknown, even to those who make it their business to discover adolescent geniuses and publish first novels. Their literary success was, none the less, immediate and startling. Even reputed novelists of the older generation hailed them as masterpieces. Julien Green was "arrivé," like Lindbergh, almost before he had started.

It soon transpired that he is a young American, born and brought up in Paris, just old enough to have, at eighteen, "done his bit" in the last days of the war. Then, only then, he discovered his own country, continued his education for two years at the University of Virginia, returned to Paris, and still in his twenties, suddenly leaped into fame.

While the critics were still praising his first book he published in *La Nouvelle Revue Française* a shorter tale, "Le Voyageur sur la Terre," which made less noise, though perhaps more significant, and indicates a fresh departure. Julien Green is also the author of "Suite Anglaise," a series of crisp, literary portraits (Johnson, William Blake, the Brontës, etc.) and has other works ready for publication.

* * *

Such are the elements of the pretty literary puzzle which is now exercising the mind of many a student of comparative literature. Was it not wonderful that a foreign writer, even though he hails from assimilative America, should have assimilated so thoroughly the models of his art, that names like Flaubert's and Balzac's bubble irresistibly as terms of comparison, on the lips of his critics? Through what artistic alchemy has a very young man so completely absorbed an old and alien culture that he was at once described by fellow-novelists as reincarnating the classical spirit of the French stage, the French novel at its origin, and quoted in the same breath as Jean Racine in "Phèdre," Molière in "Harpagon," Madame de la Fayette in "La Princesse de Clèves?"

"How *can* one be a Persian?" said Paris society of Montesquieu's young traveller in "Les Lettres Persanes" "and still be so much like us all?" "Where *can* such young and inexperienced girls have learnt the secrets of disordered passion?" said the readers of "Jane Eyre" and "Wuthering Heights," when the secret was out. The same sort of reaction, the same result of confused thinking, has been manifest in the case of Julien Green. Shall we never abstain from looking at literary talent from the angle of nationality, from the corner of a birth certificate?

"Mont-Cinère" and "Adrienne Mesurat" are mental *cases*, developing on a narrow border between psychology and pathology. If I were not afraid of an excess of technical terms, I would connect Julien Green's first two novels with the pregnant theory of *schizoïdism* now gaining ground in French and German psychiatry. Not that I consider Julien Green's first two novels as conscious adaptations of a scientific hypothesis to the problem of life. Only his generation has grown up in a world dislocated by the effects of war. The disintegration of personality is as evident in our time as it was after the Napoleonic era. *Schizoïdism* is essentially that disarticulation of the mental being,

*Avarice House. By Julien Green. New York: Harper & Bros. 1927. $2.50.

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causing a loss of vital contact with reality, and leaving the will, bewitched and possessed, at the mercy of unforseeable impulses.

A widow, Mrs. Fletcher, her daughter Emily, and her mother, Mrs. Elliott, lead a secluded life in the dark, solitary house near Washington that gives, most appropriately, its name to Julien Green's first novel. "Mont-Cinère" is not a prepossessing residence. All the more significant is the mad craving for its exclusive possession which invades and devastates Emily. All three women are commonplace; the depth and violence of their secret life is all the more striking. The book reads as if everything was calculated to isolate an inveterate passion from its victims, and make it appear self-sufficient as well as self-devouring.

The first chapters unravel the creeping growth of avarice in Mrs. Fletcher's otherwise weak and vacillating mind. Her dreadful stinginess is without purpose. She is gratuitously mean and niggardly. A multitude of small facts, uncommented, but eloquent, demonstrate the perfect autonomy of her obsession. We have here the schematically pure delineation of money-mania and thrift-madness. But not in a great French *bourgeoise*, a tough Madame Harpagon. . . . No, Mrs. Fletcher is colorless. And she is an American. Her moral portrait is made of hard, dry, innumerable little lines and dots that burn darkly like sharp metallic cinders at the bottom of a cracked crucible Julien Green was, to some extent, describing his first manner, when he spoke in his "Suite Anglaise," of William Blake's love of steely contours, and said that all objects were made equal in his eyes by their trenchant outlines.

Emily is still a child, not quite sixteen, totally ignorant of sexual and social life, painfully struggling towards womanhood. Born of a loveless union, she is unlovely, mentally slow, without vital power except for the conquest and defence of what she considers as her own. She lives, at sixteen, in the same state of crepuscular activity as many old women. Some of the symptoms of "early dementia" are manifest in her behavior. Her low vitality is sapped by the hardships and privations enforced upon her by Mrs. Fletcher. She especially suffers from cold. Mute battles between mother and daughter are fought around the empty fireplaces of Mont-Cinère.

Heredity, solitude, repression, submit Emily's development to the same inhibitions that have stunted Mrs. Fletcher's nature. But while her mother's mania was *restrictive*, Emily, by an automative reaction, becomes quietly, irresistibly *possessive*. Her soul, slowly denuded, turns into a desert where an insane craving for the exclusive ownership of Mont-Cinère entwines and smothers all other tendencies. She discovers, through her grandmother, that the house belongs to her by right. From that moment, her fate, and her mother's is sealed. Mrs. Fletcher is irresolute, except on the subject of cheese-paring. Slowly, irresistibly, she will be slimed out of her shell. With her candid directness Emily manages to get a lout of a husband who expels Mrs. Fletcher. More than nine-tenths of the book are devoted to the internal growth and conflict of these two women's mental disorder, less than one-tenth to the resulting tragedy. The last pages relate how the mistress of Mont-Cinère has defeated her own end. Her husband is the legal and real master of the house. If only she had a legal heir! But, as she writes to her only acquaintance: "I have been married more than two months, and have not yet had one single baby." She ends by trying to strangle the little daughter of her husband, sets fire to Mont-Cinère, and dies under its crumbling roof.

This first novel was an austere and desolate story, without light or love, purposely devoid of all commonplace allurements. It can almost be said to develop outside time and space. Whatever does not relate to the study of a strange but not singular case of mental disintegration is rigorously excluded. The house of Mont-Cinère is near Washington. It might as well be at Pontoise, or in Kamtchatka. There is not one trait of local color or humor, not one allusion to any event outside the Fletcher's mind and mania. A single human passion, stripped of all external trappings, walks alone, like a feline, and hunts, naked, in the night. No wonder that Julien Green was at first saluted as a reincarnation of the classic spirit. In "Mont-Cinère" and "Adrienne Mesurat," he isolates a passion in a character, a character or two in a narrow world, and makes his picture as independent as possible of both frame and background. All classic art, especially the tragedy, proceeds on the same lines. It is a stage process. It may lead to the picture of stage passions.

The Miser, in Molière (Harpagon) and Balzac (Grandet), the Man of Property in John Galsworthy's hands were all dried up by a long practice of their mania. Where did Julien Green, mere beginner as he was, get the elements of the corresponding type in a woman-child? It was left to a *débutant* to create the Girl of Property.

* * *

"Adrienne Mesurat" is the story of a French girl of eighteen smothered alive in the suffocating atmosphere of a provincial town between her bleakly tyrannic father and her old-maid of a sister. Adrienne is young and pretty but she feels closing upon her the narrow, many folding doors of the domestic convent where she is a prisoner.

Isolation and repression probably aided by an early touch of the disease from which her sister is dying, have dried up Adrienne's power of sympathy. She is morally unrooted. An irresistible reaction throws her suddenly, unexpectedly, outside the boundaries of her narrow life into a senseless passion for a perfect stranger. She has seen Docteur Maurecourt passing on the road and, though he is quite the reverse of a young hero, she at once worships the sallow-eyed widower. She *must* have her sister's room, because it overlooks the doctor's garden. She *must* go out alone after dinner, and kiss the doctor's wall. She *must* drive and help her sister to desert her wretched home. Her father is horrified and sequestrates Adrienne. One night, she never quite knew how, why, and wherefore, she suddenly pushes him from behind on the narrow staircase, and he dies of a fractured skull. "Death by accident" is the verdict. Adrienne is at last her own mistress. But liberty has only made her a double slave. Remorse and Passion, thoroughly dislocate her moral and mental identity. She wanders aimlessly and returns to her house. Maurecourt, to whom she had never yet spoken, has guessed her share in the "accident." He tries to cure her, but she throws herself at his head—and feet, and when he definitely refuses the offered gift of herself Adrienne disappears in a crisis of hysteria.

As in the case of "Mont-Cinère," nine-tenths of the book are devoted to the mental picture of a half-demented girl. Only the fag-end is crowded with incidents. There again, Passion, self-contained, self-sufficient, self-explained, naked and alone, walks in her sleep and looks at the blood on her hands. Dr. Maurecourt is as colorless a hero as Mont-Cinère was a commonplace house. The madness which they provoke is not a consequence of their charm. It comes from within. Its "purity," its gratuitousness, are all the purer and more gratuitous. Nothing in these two books is conceded to the reader's curiosity, taste for adventure, love of the picturesque. They are austerely written. The style in "Mont-Cinère" is often so awkward that whole blocks of it read like a translation, and a poor translation at that. I should not be surprised to hear that most of it was originally thought and written in English. In "Adrienne Mesurat," several chapters are of a quality, as regards expression, that leaves nothing to be desired, and some pages bear the mark of a highly trained hand. These inequalities tell their tale. It is evident that Julien Green is still on his way towards self-realization. He is already a great novelist and still a mediocre writer. He has gained celebrity not mastery. The patchy character of his two first books and unmistakable *gaucherie* of the first do not agree with the verdict of miraculous precocity and early ripeness that was passed on Julien Green after their first appearance. I consider him as magnificently gifted and yet undeveloped.

* * *

A sure sign of his evolutive capacity is "Le Voyageur sur le Terre" published in the collection "Une Oeuvre, un Portrait" (Nouvelle Revue Française). Daniel O'Donovan, aged seventeen, is found dead in the river at Fairfax (U. S.). Suicide? Accident? His diary does not solve the problem. He relates how he was left an orphan at eleven, and brought up between his uncle, selfish, mysterious, agnostic, and his aunt, born a Catholic. The couple lives in a state of subdued hostility, under the mute observation of the woman's father, a former captain in the southern army. She feeds Daniel with Irish legends, while her husband, always closeted in his library, speaks of nothing except his great book that shall never be published. Daniel finds solace in his room, which becomes a sort of personal sanctuary, and is minutely described.

He soon discovers within himself strange signs of duality. Again, but much more subtly handled, we meet that early disintegration of personality which seems to be Julien Green's principal theme. (Cf. his study of Charles Lamb in "Suite Anglaise.") Daniel's room overlooks the Presbyterian church. The conflict between North and South, latent in his uncle's family, works its unperceived way within himself. The door remains unopened, its cross unexplained. He falls a prey to the disharmony of his own nature:

> Ai-je dit que je suis sujet à des accès de terreur dont je ne parviens à démêler ni l'origine, ni la raison? C'est là mon infirmité, c'est là ce qu'il y a de triste et de honteux dans ma vie et ce que je souffre de ne pouvoir m'expliquer. Pourquoi ne suis-je pas comme tout le monde? J'ai quelquefois le sentiment qu'il y a derrière tout ce que je fais, derrière tout ce que je pense, toutes sortes de choses que je ne comprendrai jamais. Ne viennent-elles pas de moi? de mon cerveau? Et si elles viennent de moi, pourquoi me restent-elles étrangères? Est-ce que je ne m'appartiens pas? Est-ce qu'il y a une partie de moi-même qui est hors de ma portée?

Daniel's aunt dies. The old enigmatic captain who terrified Daniel, leaves the house without one word of explanation. Daniel grows up in apparent idleness, does nothing but read, and receives one day a letter from his aunt's absconded father who sends him money for his education. He decamps at once, reaches Fairfax University a little before the re-opening, feels out of his element, meets a strange student of his age, and hires a room, a strange room. . . . There stops the Diary. From some letters exchanged after Daniel's death between different persons, (his uncle, a journalist, etc.,) it transpires that Daniel's father and mother were mentally unsound; that *he has never met any other student;* that a dream of double existence ending in suicide, related in the Diary, coïncides with the circumstances of Daniel's death, that he has burnt all his beloved books; that the pastor considers Daniel as "struck by the grace of God."

There was little left to the reader's imagination in "Mont-Cinère" and "Adrienne Mesurat." In "Le Voyageur," we feel nearer the invisible. "Mont-Cinère" and "Adrienne" were romantic themes (early passion) treated in a classic manner (concentrated, light, rigorous composition) by a young man still fresh from a classic education. "Le Voyageur sur la Terre" is a much shorter and quieter tale, freed from all dramatic and mechanical contrivances. It deals with that *mal-du siècle* which all centuries have known (as witness Orestes and Hamlet). But it treats the old theme in a sober and detached spirit, half scientific and half intuitive, always in touch with the established facts and inner mysteries of modern psychiatry. There is in Julien Green's work something of the attitude of a young alienist facing strange cases among his own brothers and cousins. It would be interesting to discuss here the validity and opportunity of that transfusion of scientific psycho-pathology (I do not speak here of Freudism) into the realm of fiction. If, as General Smuts has shown in a recent work, the study of personality is the key to all other studies concerning the fate of man, then nothing can be more legitimate and illuminating than the interpretation in imaginative literature of what we call so lightly abnormal mentalities. Normality, sanity, are abstract terms. In real life, there is no type, normal or otherwise, but intermittency, alternancy, infinitesimal differentiation. Mental *cases* are only variations, even in their extreme forms, of "normal" conditions. We cannot experiment upon human minds nor vivisect living souls. Even if we could, it would never be with the same subtlety and thoroughness as Nature. True or supposed "diseases" are experiments made by Nature. It is our business to interpret them. The scientist's interpretation is necessary, but lifeless; it ends in categories and results in classification. The novelist's, if he brings genius to his task, is alive and pregnant.

To sum up. Julien Green's case is not, in my opinion, a case of miraculous precocity, nor is it a symptom of collective deliquescence in the post-war generation. He is a wonderfully gifted young man, but not a Hampdenshire Wonder of the modern novel. Fresh from a French and classic education, he has begun, like many others, by pouring his metal into old moulds. But "Adrienne" and "Mont-Cinère" are only first casts. Julien Green is likely to develop on the line of the "Voyageur sur la Terre" and, like the rest of us, he will follow the Way of all Flesh, towards the end of all things.

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"Laurel Spirts i' the Fire"

MAN POSSESSED. Being the Selected Poems of William Rose Benét. New York: George H. Doran Company. 1927. $2.50.

Reviewed by O. W. Firkins

THERE are collections and selections of verse. In "Man Possessed" Mr. Benét has both collected and selected the contents of earlier volumes. He has earned this privilege. His vocation is unmistakable; he is a poet; the sinews in his anatomy are chords. He is an assiduous and conscientious artist. He is quite surprisingly free from the vagaries and distempers, literary and moral, which make us sometimes feel that the crying need of our latter-day Parnassus is a hospital. The phrase, the pitfall of our contemporaries, is in Mr. Benét normally incorrupt; rarely, as in "harsh gold scorn" (applied to trumpets), the decade speaks and not the man. He can lower his diction without debasing it, and is so much the inborn gentleman that, when two grades of dignity or elevation meet in his work, the higher dominates the lower (see "Quick Lunch"). If his compass is narrow, his variety within that narrowness is astonishing. Lastly, he has his own holding, his *peculium*, in the kingdom of the Muses,—briefly describable as the union of color, velocity, and trance.

The phrase from Herrick which heads this article expresses not inaptly two of these three points. He gives us laurel, that is, poetry; spirting—that is, in quick motion; in the fire—that is, in a form of brilliance. To this bright saliency I add a third quality, trance,—the quality which, in the midst of visual splendors, closes its eyes, and sees through the dropped lids mirages which have not only all the vividness but all the apparent body of the objectivities they replace. This equal virility in the actualities and the phantasms, though not his main virtue, is perhaps his most noticeable singularity. Trance is akin to ecstasy. When Mr. Benét adds ecstasy to trance ("Harlem," "The Singing Skyscrapers," "The Horse Thief") he is close to his zenith.

This verse demands a vigorous, almost a tireless, response. These are poems to be read by high-spirited young fellows between a gallop and a swim. If the armchair, in which so many reviewers sit, finds them a little exigent, rather breath-taking, that may be the armchair's fault. I am tempted into a confession. Apart from a few poems, I like this book best in glimpses,—a sparkle on the page, a title, a proper name, a phrase, a sudden rhyme; perusal is too industrious; a glance seems the fit correlate for a gleam. This agrees with the fact that the poems seem to lack a definite, or at least a definitely rememberable, issue. We forget that the Merchants of Cathay were swallowed up in Pits Abysmal. Can serious men, intent on silks from Sugarmago and dyes from Isfahan, be bothered with these frivolous catastrophes? I am moved here to quote a charming sonnet "On Edward Webbe, English Gunner" with italics to emphasize its culminations.

He met the Danske pirates off Tuttee;
Saw the Chrim burn "Musko;" speaks with bated breath
Of his sale to the great Turk, when peril of death
Chained him to oar their galleys on the sea
Until, as gunner, in Persia they set him free
To fight their foes. Of Prester John he saith
Astounding things. *But Queen Elizabeth*
He worships, and his dear Lord on Calvary.

Quaint is the phrase, ingenuous the wit
Of this great childish seaman in Palestine,
Mocked home through Italy after his release
With threats of the Armada; and all of it
Warms me like firelight jeweling old wine
In some ghost inn hung with the golden fleece!

Note that Edward Webbe has passions, even adorations, but that these serve finally only for an enhancement of the attractiveness, not for the palate, but for the eye, of old wine in an inn which Mr. Benét, for the sake of the pleasing epithet "ghost," is content to despoil of all reality. Passions serve to enrich gleams. Is Mr. Benét that kind of poet?

That kind of poet, yes—not, I think, that kind of man; and this second fact, or surmise, is my only reason for quarreling with the first. Let the gleams have a minstrel to themselves. Why not? But I hesitate a little about Mr. Benét's candidacy for the post. When I read "Sonnets to My Father," I want to touch the author's hand. When I read "The Horse Thief," which is undoubtedly the better poem, I merely want to clap my own. The poet *tills*, as it were, only a part of the man, or the man's soul; the untouched part might be even worthier of tillage. Even if Mr. Benét be wise in his large relinquishments, I do not quite renounce my sorrow for the circumstance, whatever it may be, that makes that self-restriction wise. And when I reopen the volume and read "Man Possessed," the best and highest of the poems to my mind and the poem in whose spiritual ardor these restrictions are effectually transcended, again I meditate. Again, viewing the whole book, I ask: Bright, swift, and dauntless as the music may be, is not half the libretto unrepresented in the score?

A Corner of Louisiana

GRITNEY PEOPLE. By Emmet Kennedy. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company. 1927. $2.50.

Reviewed by Julia Peterkin
Author of "Black April"

THIS is a collection of thirty-three tales written in the manner of the Canterbury Tales, concerning a company of sundry people, all negroes of different shades, except one man who is white but was raised by negroes. These all gather at the cook shop of an old negro woman, to eat and laugh and talk and sing when the night of July Fourth offers an excuse for Aunt Susan to

JULIEN GREEN

have a "Big Enterprise," as the extra occasion is called, in Gretna, Louisiana.

While the specialties of the shop, gumbo and sweet potato pie, are consumed, the customers tell each other stories, gossip about their neighbors both black and white, and philosophize about life itself. The conversations fall into their appointed places as tales which reveal the lives and loves and superstitions and religious views of the town's dark population, to whom as a rule, Nature's ways are God's ways.

I suspect that few white writers have been blessed like Emmet Kennedy, with the ability to penetrate that shyness which makes the simplest negro strive to conceal what he honestly thinks. Self defense, self preservation, makes his mental machinery inclined to work under such close cover that it often seems curious and indirect. Even those writers who are entirely willing to take the trouble to consider negroes as human beings who are controlled by the same Fate which moves their white brethren and forces all human creatures to live and love and hate and suffer and die, are sometimes deceived by a superficial tact, a *savoir faire*, which is assumed as a simple protection. This mask often makes the wearers appear to be what the world prefers them to be; happy-go-lucky comedy figures, incapable of either thought or suffering.

Even among people who have written well and adequately about southern negroes, a people left by Fate or Providence or whatever power it is that shapes the destinies of us all, entirely without economic opportunity, either the grotesque and humorous have been exploited or a distorted picture made on account of an overworked sentimentality. Mr. Kennedy has steered clear of both dangers. Both comedy and tragedy stalk through his pages, the frightful weight of environment is emphasized by means of the white man's life, the tales taken as a whole, make a dark, even a gloomy pattern, but it is probably a pattern that life itself has woven, and which Emmet Kennedy has merely recorded with the faithfulness given by a kindly sympathy and a deep interest.

Gretna, a little Louisiana town, across the river from New Orleans, becomes a place we know well, and through the curious dialect of its people we discover that in a tiny corner of earth, far-away from ourselves, odd romances go on, and a homely wisdom guides simple people on their paths through life.

The Play of the Week

By Oliver M. Sayler

PERIPHERIE. By Frantisek Langer. SERVANT OF TWO MASTERS. By Carlo Goldoni. LOVE AND INTRIGUE. By Friedrich von Schiller. THE LIVING CORPSE. By Leo Tolstoy. Produced in German by Max Reinhardt with His Companies from the Deutsches Theater, Berlin, and the Theater in der Josefstadt, Vienna, at the Cosmopolitan Theatre, New York, respectively January 2, 9, 16 and 23, 1928.

Reviewed from Performance and Manuscript

IN appraising Max Reinhardt's contribution to the interpretation of the word in the theatre five weeks ago on the basis of the three spectacular productions in his season of German repertory, I found him a master of massed players, a supremely skilful stage craftsman, and a resourceful prospector among the drama's forgotten treasures, unflinchingly retrieving their original significance in terms and media relevant today. Except for the first of these qualities, pertaining naturally to spectacle only, the intimate productions which have followed have only reinforced the previous verdict while throwing into focus still other aspects of his genius.

Reinhardt's stagecraftsmanship becomes intensive rather than extensive when he turns from the circus to the cameo. Instead of enveloping his audiences in the atmosphere of spectacle and even enrolling them as participant players, he leaves them discreetly alone, busying himself with the task of seizing and holding their credulous attention upon the play's unfolding panorama. To this end, instead of deploying his lights to reveal vast throngs and suggest yet vaster, he concentrates them on compact groups, on a single countenance. Just as he is neither slavishly realistic nor egregiously fantastic and expressionistic in lighting a broad expanse, so he avoids both extremes within the narrower frame. We are so accustomed to the one extreme or the other that tradition-bound spectators may be a bit confused at the unrealistic torrent of light with which he floods a chosen corner, figure, or face. But the seeming paradox dissolves when we find that this unrealistic expedient multiplies manyfold the realistic expressive power of the player, throwing the outer evidence and image of profound emotions sharply and clearly upon eyes in the rear of the theatre.

To the end of intensified and sustained illusion, too, Reinhardt minimizes the breaks caused by frequent intermissions and tedious scene changes. To each of the intimate dramas, he allotted but a single intermission. Even this was a concession to our all-too-human powers of attention, for, as Reinhardt conceives a play, there is no structural necessity for an interval. The mind bridges gaps of space and time in a flash, and he feels that it is incumbent on the theatre to avoid unnecessary obstacles to this mobility. Hence, his devotion to and notable success in swift shifting of scenery, often without dropping the curtain, and all without the aid of revolving stage or other costly mechanism, thus acting on his own advice: "Do not spare stage properties and machinery where they are needed, but do not impose them on a play that does not need them."

As with his stagecraftsmanship, Reinhardt usually carries over from spectacle to intimate drama his pragmatic attitude toward dramatic classics: "How to make a play live in our time, that is decisive for us." With a wealth of invention commensurate with present-day moods and taste and prompted by the individual talents of his players, he gives unflagging vitality and tireless gusto to the dry bones and obvious clichés of Goldoni's "Servant of Two Masters." Nor does he limit this function of rehabilitation to the classics. When a contemporary dramatist like the Czecho-Slovakian, Frantisek Langer, contributes scenes and a dénouement in "Periphery" which seem to him ineffective, beside

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the point, misleading or leading nowhere, he persuades the playwright to recast his work to fulfil its latent possibilities. "Periphery" as we have seen it, therefore, has become a study in spiritual purgation, instead of the bizarre and ironic fantasy which first left Langer's pen. I should like to have seen the regisseur apply his remolding imagination more unequivocally to the trite and sentimental heroics of Schiller's "Love and Intrigue." German reverence for this quite absurd and arbitrarily tragic tale of romantic passion would probably prevent Reinhardt—in Central Europe, at least—from turning it into a sophisticated and ironic comedy. But he has been equally free with plays of other times and climes.

In addition to these two qualities which Reinhardt bestows without favor on productions, large and small, his intimate dramas further illustrate one positive and one negative trait in his art. The former concerns the brilliance of his acting ensemble; the latter, the exaggeration of his comic, heroic, and passionate scenes, as measured by our own acting standards and tastes.

No producer, however versatile, can serve adequately the cause of oral and visualized literature without able artists to embody his conceptions of play and characters. Reinhardt has always been fortunate in commanding the fealty of the foremost players and the most stimulating stage-designers of Central Europe. Wherever Reinhardt was, there was life. To be associated with him was to be in the inner circle, just as in Moscow with the Art Theatre. The economic crises of the past decade have given individual players an unwarranted conception of their importance and have shattered the unquestioning and self-imposed discipline of the early Deutsches Theater, a discipline which persists under Stanislavsky and Nemirovitch-Dantchenko despite Russia's even profounder chaos. But the Reinhardt ensemble, ever-changing, remains essentially the same in standards, in variety of talents, and in the flexibility of their application. I need cite only two instances involving two players to point my meaning. While Helene Thimig was cast for the peasant passions of Luise and Lili Darvas for the aristocratic passions of Lady Milford in "Love and Intrigue," they could have exchanged rôles and have given just as brilliant a performance. If you doubt it, recall how they did thus brilliantly and successfully exchange social stations in portraying the contrasting roles of Lisa and Masha, the women who loved Fedya, in the Tolstoy drama. On the whole, the center of gravity of Reinhardt's present acting ensemble, more easily calculable in the intimate dramas than in the spectacles, seems to have veered to the south, for Moissi and the remnants of the old Berlin company are emphatically outweighed by the Thimigs—Helene, Hermann, and Hans, of Vienna, and Frau Darvas, of Budapest.

The negative aspect of this superb acting ensemble is mitigated by corresponding positive qualities. The pitch and tone of Teutonic acting is patently higher than our own. Reinhardt recognized the two standards and wisely did not insist on our copying his native standard when he staged "The Miracle" here. Neither did he try to tamper with his own players when they came here, for an effort to make them conform to our standards would have left them hopelessly at sea. Furthermore, we must admit that alongside the exaggerated comedy of "Servant of Two Masters," there was subtlety and sophistication. Alongside the sentimental heroics of "Love and Intrigue," there was dignity. Alongside the febrile passions of "Periphery," there was spiritual vision.

If a remediable mistake was made in shaping Reinhardt's German season, it was that the repertory was not German enough. Reason and experience have proven that any dramatic company gives of its best and avoids gratuitous comparisons and criticism when it interprets its own dramatic literature.

(Mr. Sayler will review next week "Marco Millions" and "Strange Interlude" by Eugene O'Neill.)

PLAYS OF THE SEASON

Still Running in New York

BURLESQUE. By *Arthur Hopkins* and *George Manker Watters*. Plymouth Theatre. The personal equation beneath pink tights and putty nose.

THE GOOD HOPE. By *Herman Heijermans*. Civic Repertory Theatre. A European repertory veteran ably revived on our only repertory stage.

PORGY. By *Dorothy* and *DuBose Heyward*. Republic Theatre. The rhythms of Negro life interpreted in pulsing drama.

ESCAPE. By *John Galsworthy*. Booth Theatre. Leslie Howard *et al.* in the dramatist's latest—and last—play.

THE IVORY DOOR. By *A. A. Milne*. Charles Hopkins Theatre. An ironic and whimsical fairy tale for grown-ups.

AND SO TO BED. By *J. B. Fagan*. Bijou Theatre. A satiric and pungent comedy based on a presumable day in the amorous life of Samuel Pepys, Esq.

THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA. By *Bernard Shaw*. Guild Theatre. A debated and debating play set squarely on its feet at last by sound acting and discerning direction.

JUNO AND THE PAYCOCK. By *Sean O'Casey*. Gallo Theatre. The Irish Players in another realistic representation of the sordidness of the Dublin tenement.

BEHOLD, THE BRIDEGROOM. By *George Kelly*. Cort Theatre. Dying for love explained by modern psychology.

Father of Waters

MOSTLY MISSISSIPPI. By HAROLD SPEAKMAN. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company. 1927. $3.50.

FATHER MISSISSIPPI. By LYLE SAXON. New York: The Century Company. 1927. $5.

Reviewed by BERNARD DE VOTO

THE bracketing of these two books does an injustice to Mr. Speakman's, which, though frankly casual, is thus made to stand comparison with a serious and far more ambitious work. "Mostly Mississippi" is the story of how a young man and his wife traveled the great river from source to mouth, first in a canoe and later in a small houseboat. It recounts the vicissitudes of a long outing trip, the portages, storms, and accidents of the day's routine, together with the jovial or quaint or unpleasant folk that drift with the stream or live beside it and watch it flow. At Dubuque Mr. Saxon finds an old lady whom he draws reading the *New Yorker*. At Hannibal he interviews the original of Becky Thatcher and discovers a gentleman who will not believe that Mark Twain could write a book unfit for publication in a set. St. Louis pleases him; he finds Dubuque rather better than its detractors have made it out; Quincy, Illinois, he rightly appraises as a focus of all that is held to be odious in Middle Western culture. His drawings and paintings, with those of Mrs. Speakman, add much to his pleasant narrative. The book has the fascination of irresponsible hours on an indolent current, snug nights in the cabin of a moored houseboat that lifts to the swell of packets, and the peaceful observation of river life. Mr. Speakman's superficiality, however, may be judged from the fact that, at Nauvoo, he gives as the date of the Mormon martyrdom a year when the church had already been two years in Utah, and is not even aware that the Latter Day Saints he meets there belong to a different sect.

"Father Mississippi" is part epic, part pageant, and part rhapsody. It is the work of a historian who is also a lover, of a scholar who is nine parts poet. More than anything written since Mark Twain's "Life on the Mississippi" it conveys the power and glamour and terror of the river. One must insist on its importance. It is a book that will create lesser ones: there will yet be novels and no doubt learned arguments that, stemming from it, fail to acknowledge their source. It is so much of an accomplishment that one hopes it may correct several of the stereotypes that have served for critical opinion. Historical thinking discovered more than thirty years ago that other rivers than the Hudson had a share in the American experience. There is no assurance that literary thinking will catch up with the historians of 1900 for another generation, but Mr. Saxon has done his part.

He presents America. Down that turbid stream pour the hosts. There are explorers, pioneers, soldiers, traders, river-rats, raftmen, steamboaters. Mike Fink and Annie Christmas serve for the mythic background. The body of DeSoto is cast into the river. Father Hennepin, captured by Indians, laboriously follows the course upstream and conceives that the western sea cannot be far away. The daughter of an Illinois chief, with others of her nation, visits Louis XV at Versailles, refreshes the court with dances in the aboriginal costume, and returns to New Orleans as the wife of an army captain whom she deserts, flinging her new corsets away. Molly Glass, for sadistic murder, has her hand chopped off and, being hanged, has her head published on a pole. Mrs. Martin, friend of Andrew Jackson and the pirate Lafitte, returns from Louisiana to Tennessee where, her horse being frightened by Indians, she breaks a leg which has to be amputated by the methods of the frontier. Meanwhile at New Orleans there is opera and an exquisite choice in wines. And while they dispute about the Pléiade along Old Levee Street, river pirates disembowel the corpses of their victims to fill them with sand and so sink them. But at Memphis, Kaskaskia, and St. Louis, white houses already old are crumbling away and there is an already ancient tradition of amenity and grace. Natchez drowses among old lawns, but Natchez-under-the-Hill has a career that is still memorable in American maleness. So it goes. Everywhere the inconvenient nuclei of civilization in the roaring, barbaric seas of the pioneer age. Criticism holds that, of American civilization, there has been only an island: history exhibits a far-scattered archipelago.

Then the steamboats. A new era, a new civilization, with its surprising commerce, its negro stevedores singing songs that would be vogue a century later, its gamblers, its magnificently blatant vigor everywhere. Then, finally, the War. It was really the railroads that put an end to steamboating. But, Mr. Saxon says, Secretary Hoover would be unwise to call rehabilitation of the flooded districts Reconstruction.

Always—and rightly—Mr. Saxon insists upon the vigor of the nation, the restless strength, the vast power, the eternal flux. This way passed a great part of our history, and rather more of our tradition. It is well to be reminded, sometimes, of what the thinking of the critically wise has ignored.

More than a third of the book is devoted to a history of the floods with which from time to time the Mississippi has mocked the efforts to subdue it and especially, the flood of last spring. This account is splendidly effective, but we could have spared it for more chapters about the plantation of Mr. Saxon's boyhood or a still more extensive panorama of the great days. It is right for anyone to remind us that the problem of the floods has not been solved and must be. But that is a job that many men could do, whereas only Mr. Saxon, in this generation, is able to give us the life of the Mississippi. One thinks of the dozen or so sentimental old gentlemen who have tried to present plantation life, and of how far Mr. Saxon goes beyond them. One thinks of the more than a dozen authorities who have analyzed and appraised the national life without even being aware that the Mississippi or the land it drains has any part therein, and of how much dynamite for their theories there is in Mr. Saxon's pages. Assuredly there must some day be a realization, even in literature, that the national experience is far richer and far less localized than the theories of the seaboard indicate. A book so genuine and so exquisitely done as "Father Mississippi" makes such a day something more than a mere hope.

We Asked for Bread—

(Continued from page 565)

take on serenity and the notes ring like silver bells—these assure the human, the personal in continuity, and are persuasive because to feel humanity is to be human, not a machine. And that is an essence of literature, perhaps the essence. How skilfully does the impressive competence of so many modern books, with their careful fabrics of romantic story, or their psycho-physiologic analyses of sophisticated sophisms, miss it altogether. Of course we like to be told about Main Street, Park Avenue, the erotic personality, the true character of Washington, how to be a President, the doings of all the bad little girls and boys—but *that is not literature*. What is human, timeless, not merely real but ourselves interpreted and illumined by words which are themselves emotion, that is what we crave, and until we get it we will never be satisfied with the name of literature.

The Saturday Review of Literature

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How Many Bards—!

By William Rose Benét

PECCAVI! I myself am a guilty anthologist. I have perpetrated one volume of the kind and I shall perpetrate at least part of another before I am through. But this is not an advertisement. And wait a moment, don't depart suddenly with the idea that I disapprove of anthologies or feel my sin greater than I can bear. I have had a great deal of pleasure out of numerous anthologies. A good many of us have in our possession copies of the "Oxford Book of English Verse" so well-worn that the binding is loose, the thin paper all crinkled, the gilt edges beyond restoration tarnished. Almost everyone in this age who cares anything about poetry was weaned on the "Oxford Book."

And what else, you ask. Oh I don't know; where would our erudite knowledge of the British ballad be without Percy's "Reliques"? "Q's" other "Oxford Book of Victorian Verse," though more unhandy in size, is a treasurable volume. Emerson and Whittier and Bryant made collections that acquainted us with much of the best in our youth. Stedman's "An American Anthology" and "A Victorian Anthology" are still worth perusing. There are a number of most interesting volumes of Irish poetry and as many of the poetry of Scotland. Louis Untermeyer, in our own day, has done extremely well with his selections from all the newer American and English poets, not to mention Jessie B. Rittenhouse. William Stanley Braithwaite voluminously showed the way to others who now sort the year's best from the magazines. And then along came Burton Egbert Stevenson, remembering Bryant, and furnished forth a tome indeed, entitled "The Home Book of Verse." He followed it with another, "The Home Book of Modern Verse." He included almost everything, good, bad, and indifferent. Meanwhile Harriet Monroe and Marguerite Wilkinson, in the days when poetry in America indulged in what has been termed a renaissance, paraded and discussed the new tendencies. Mention of this many anthologies of poetry written in the English tongue is, in all conscience, enough. There are hundreds, perhaps there are thousands, of other volumes; to say nothing at all of collections of foreign poetry. Any good private library has about a dozen poetry anthologies on its shelves.

A great deal of this anthologizing is comparatively worthless. That goes without saying. The same ground is covered and a number of anthologists seem merely to recompile from each other. Yet there always appears to be room for more. A favorite amusement of minor collectors is getting together "Poems about Birds," "Poems of Uplift," "Patriotic Poems," "Poems of Domestic Animals," and the like. In my declining years I purpose myself to do a series with some such titles as "Poems about Worms," "Headstones: A Collection of Cemetery Stanzas," and—but unfortunately I was some years ago anticipated in a title by John Peale Bishop and Edmund Wilson who rather unfairly characterized a volume of joint original work of theirs as "The Undertaker's Garland."

Here on my desk today is a new batch of anthologies. It does not include Bliss Carman's recent "Oxford Book of American Verse;" and I am glad of that, for the nature of his selections from contemporary work is so excessively peculiar and fails so utterly properly to represent the poets of this land that I would probably become acrid and immediately be accused of "sour grapes" because of the omission of my own sterling product. That would be certain to happen. So I shall say, as you see, comparatively nothing.

The most important book that is present would appear to the majority to be the two volumes boxed of "The Book of Poetry" compiled by our veteran poet Edwin Markham, "during sixty years," as the blurb hath it, "of 'joyous rovings among the poets'." I could have wished for another phrase. I could also have wished that the reproduction of the holograph quatrain, "Outwitted," by Mr. Markham had not been pasted on the case containing these books. Not that this is a bad quatrain. On the contrary, it is a good one, though not perhaps "the greatest ever written," as is stated. But in spite of the publishers making the point that it expresses the spirit of the collection, it seems to me out of place. Mr. Markham here draws a circle that takes in a good deal of the best in the work of American and British poets. But that is not so important as certain other aspects of the book.

Despite the fact that most readers would think I should begin with Mr. Markham's exhaustive, and rather exhausting, collection, I had intended to put first Harry Kemp's far more original and exciting "The Bronze Treasury." And, indeed, even if I break the continuity of what I am saying, I shall do it anyway. We return to Mr. Markham anon. I am of the firm opinion that Harry Kemp has done a far more arousing thing. He has made an anthology of Obscure English poets. His absorption has long been in the odd and unappreciated singers of the past. He determined years ago, as he stated in "Tramping on Life," to make these men live again "with all their charm and idiosyncrasy." And to me he has succeeded.

The Macaulay Company is to be congratulated upon the attractive volume they have made of Kemp's selections with his fine and individual prose introductions to each of the eighty-one poets included. The type arrangement of the book and its nine illustrations from old drawings and prints make it a genuine pleasure to read. Some readers may carp at the anthologist's headlong somewhat disjointed style. He gives us his poets in flashes, in impetuous and often brilliantly brief characterization, in relished anecdote, in comparisons sometimes far-fetched, sometimes genuine "discoveries." This is no thorough volume. It bears marks of haste, of impatience. But it is redeemed by its gusto, by its exhilarated rummage in a hundred little-ransacked veins whose quartz glitters with true gold. Kemp knows the gold when he sees it. A vagabond himself, with but a vagabond's library, he can bring before you vividly an unknown with the prodigious name of Shakerley Marmion fortuning in the Low Countries, can quote you from the manual of arms of the English soldier of the period, in another breath can show how Marmion "antedates Keats in 'Keatsian' verbal felicity and richness," with chapter and verse. He can make ancients who are now but names to most of us, such as Thomas Tusser, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, Henry King, John Wilmot, Dodsley, Shenstone, Cotton, Akenside, fresh and delightful in his comment and quotation. I do not feel that he does full justice to either Skelton or Drayton in that same quotation, though his pithy remarks upon them are worth having. In the nineteenth century he comes down to my favorites Darley and Beddoes and makes an end with Théophile Marzials and Sir Lewis Morris. But this hardly indicates at all how rich is his book with a variety of personages. I am inclined to criticize his inclusion of Drayton, Waller, Samuel Johnson, and Coventry Patmore in this group. They appear to me not to belong among the truly obscure. Yet he can pluck from Erasmus Darwin the four delightful lines upon "The Diamond Beetle," and match often throughout the volume in phrase and embellished tale the deliciousness of the inserted plate of Apollo crowning Shenstone with the bays. "The Bronze Treasury" is peculiarly individual and always lively. If it is not a scholarly work it is something far better, a book vibrant with helter-skelter enthusiasm, alive to all the richness of other times and other manners, and, above all a spirited introduction to the richness of fields too frowardly forgotten by an age swollen with its own importance, though these fields lie only on the lower slopes of Parnassus.

I have hinted that Edwin Markham is inclusive rather than eclectic. So far as his selections from the older American poetry goes, there is little at which to cavil. Opinions differ. I myself might have chosen this rather than that. His representation of contemporary American poetry is certainly far superior in every way to the above-referred-to Bliss Carman. Yet, though there is much in the work of E. E. Cummings that does not appeal to me, I cannot see how he could very well have been excluded, when such small fry as May Folwell Hoisington, Muriel Strode, and Elias Lieberman gain admission. Nor do I regard John Cowper Powys (good as he is) or Robert W. Service as American poets,—and why, in the name of Heaven, Edgar A. Guest? Here is nothing from John Crowe Ransom; yet Nellie B. Miller has a poem beginning,

> Somewhere Beauty dwells, all undefiled;
> For I have seen a rose unfold
> At dawn,
> And wonder grow
> In the eyes of a child,

the sentiment being admirable enough, but further than that . . . !

In that second volume, why not buy a Browning outright when his allotment runs to one hundred and twenty-eight pages. Tennyson comes next with eighty-four, Swinburne with seventy-four, Keats with sixty. Shelley, in the first volume got sixty-nine, and Wordsworth was kept more in compass with but twenty-two. These enormous hunks out of the English classics unfairly overshadow what the more modern English singers have been doing, and among the moderns, to take an instance of what I deem lack of proportion, Alfred Noyes is given fuller and more characteristic representation than either John Masefield or Walter de la Mare. Such criticisms seem to be unavoidably necessary in reviewing any so ambitious work as this, and, on the other hand, it is freely admitted that Mr. Markham, with an enormous and unenviable task before him (albeit it is presented as the labor of love or years) has constructed a work of unusual range. It is obvious that he has endeavored to be conscientiously thorough. William H. Wise and Company of New York have given his volumes a neat and serviceable dress, the books appearing bound in strong gray boards, the type and paper being that of the Oxford Books.

Last I come to Robert Haven Schauffler's "The Poetry Cure," subtitled "A Medicine Chest of Verse, Music and Pictures," and published by Dodd, Mead. Mr. Schauffler approaches poetry therapeutically. It is to him the healing art. His section headings are in the nature of prescriptions: "Stimulants for a Faint Heart," "Mental Cocktails," "Massage for the Muscle-Bound Spirit," and so on. He carries out his original idea through a volume of much individuality of choice and much variety. This is the "stunt" anthology, as it might be called, done with verve and freshness. It picks and chooses where it will and obeys only its own laws. It is rather sumptuously presented by the publishers, though I do not care a great deal for the coated paper on which it is printed.

Such are the volumes worth comment on my desk. The hundred poems to Colonel Lindbergh in "The Spirit of St. Louis" (Doran), the fruit of a prize competition already sufficiently discussed in the press, the "200 Best and Second Best Poems" chosen by C. Lewis Hind for G. P. Putnam's Sons, "The Echo Anthology of Verse," edited by David Raffelock and brought out by the Echo Publishing Company in Denver, Colorado, are three other items that need not detain us here.

Genesis Reinterpreted

EDEN. By Murray Sheehan. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company. 1928. $2.

Reviewed by Grace Frank

THE two latest additions to apocryphal literature—Mr. Sheehan's "Eden" and Mr. Erskine's "Adam and Eve"—have little in common unless it be this: both books are heterodox and neither, even in a theological dissertation of the year 5000, could possibly be confused with the canonical writings of an earlier day. Mr. Sheehan has gone about the task of interpreting the first chapters of Genesis more soberly than Mr. Erskine; in manner and mood he is *legato* where Mr. Erskine is *pizzicato*. He also has carried his interpretation further in time and space. But throughout both books the modern *Zeitgeist* has so redistributed the old moral values and so controverted the implications of the old story that in one of them we emerge on the side of Lilith and in the other on the side of Cain.

The tragedy of the Fall, according to "Eden," lay not so much in Man's disobedience to God as in Man's substitution of a sense of right and wrong for a sense of beauty. It was Adam's knowledge of good and evil that closed his eyes to the loveliness of Paradise; through his purely ethical estimate of his universe that universe became hideous. And Adam himself, who before the Fall had been joyous and carefree, exultant in the glories of the Garden and the exquisiteness of Eve, after it turned ugly, domineering, and unctuous. Presently indeed he was solemnly asserting that Eden had been a "stinking hole of iniquity" and was piously praising the Almighty for saving him from its depravity.

As time went on Adam became more and more sanctimonious, more and more convinced of his own godhead. He spent his days ordering Eve about and devising new rituals, sacrifices, and prohibitions. At the very time when Eve was giving birth to Cain, he was so busily engaged in making a fire for a deity who must be placated by the smell of smoke that he was quite unaware of what was happening.

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Small wonder that "God yawned and turned aside," saying, " 'We are not greatly interested in man as he now is'."

Cain, according to this apocryphal version, was conceived in the ecstatic days before Adam and Eve had been driven out of Eden, and Adam actually failed to recognize this son of Paradise as his own. So when Abel came—"the offspring they had planned for"—the first-born was neglected and left to the lightsome ministration of a she-goat. Companioned only by this foster-mother, Cain wandered at will and eventually was brought back to Eden, where for many years he enjoyed the natural and happy life that his parents had long since forfeited and forgotten. It was Lilith who carried Cain to Paradise, Lilith, born of a stray idea of opposition that passed through God's thought, Lilith who for desire of Adam had of old cajoled the serpent into tempting Eve.

But Cain too, leaves the Garden, lured back to his family by the sight of Eve. He returns to find his mother a nagging, sullenly submissive drudge, his father intent only on the proper dippings of heads and knees, and his joyless brother scheming to make him a tiller of the stubborn ground while he himself assumes the easier task of keeping sheep. The murder that follows is admirably motivated—it is Cain's foster-mother that Abel offers unto Jehovah—and quite evidently God's consequent exhibition of anger is intended rather to impress Adam than to curse the murderer. To be sure, Cain sets forth, a fugitive and a wanderer. But his unhappiness is not for long. The Land of Nod is a gracious land, he meets Lilith there in her least malignant aspect, and we take leave of him in the end seeking a goat to mother their child and—"never-ending quest"—a Garden of Eden in which to live once more the life that had been his.

Mr. Sheehan tells his story in beautifully modulated prose. His sentences have been formed by a fastidious pen and an ear sensitive to flowing harmonies. His interpretation is not without humor and subtlety, a humor and subtlety that never become strident. One may register an objection to the reiterated premise that a knowledge of good and evil is necessarily incompatible with a sense of beauty; one may detect certain illogicalities in the several rôles of Lilith; one may find the contribution of ideas somewhat meagerly proportioned to the length of the novel, and the style not always consonant with the theme. Nevertheless one must welcome work at once so full-bodied and so imaginative, so sincere and so graciously contrived.

A Tale of Witchcraft

THE PLACE CALLED DAGON. By HERBERT S. GORMAN. Doran. 1927. $2.50.

Reviewed by MARY ELLEN CHASE

READERS of Mr. Gorman know him, and perhaps to better advantage, as a biographer rather than as a novelist. His most recent story reflects from beginning to end, palely yet unmistakably, the results of his critical and interpretative studies. Hawthorne and James Joyce, both subjects of his research, have lent him subject matter, points of view, and style, and the result is as incongruous as one might expect from such an anomalous combination.

His story, "The Place Called Dagon," purports to be, in the words of his publishers, a modern tale of witchcraft. Those witches who in 1692 escaped the noose fled from Salem to western Massachusetts and there in a "cul-de-sac of the hills" founded the hamlets of Leominster and Marlborough. Here live their children's children, desirous above all else of concealing their tainted ancestry, and yet, in spite of themselves, marked by it to a degree in which they become susceptible to Jeffrey Westcott, their half-crazed neighbor and self-imposed leader. Such a situation, one must admit, is interesting. What could not Hawthorne have done with it? The trouble lies largely, it would seem, in the author's lack of any clear vision of his finished work. Is he writing a mystery or a detective story, a treatise on atavism, a romance of chivalry, or a study in abnormal psychology? Traits of all four tread on one another's toes, and confusion results. It is the same with the style. Turgid and laborious accounts of the character of the country and of the young doctor's ruminations thereon do not give easy way to fragments of sentences, which with their concrete details describe the consumption of greasy cabbage at the Slater dinner-table or in ultra-modern guise attempt to chronicle the fleeting ideas and impressions of the same young doctor. Thus it is that the book loses unity of effect.

But there is a story. That fact is inescapable. Banish the pages of undistinguished description, the monologues of Doctor Lathrop, which unlike those of Prospero in "The Tempest" are seldom cut by a necessary and flattering Miranda, the endless repetitions, bringing to mind that reproach in the New Testament against those who "think they may be heard for their much speaking," the abundance of figures, mostly trite or over-reached, and the interminable postponement of the climactic scene—banish these all to Coventry, and yet there will be left a short story that might well light a candle in the keen and ruthless eyes of any editor.

Librarians tell us that the greatest demand for mystery and detective stories comes from those in the teaching profession. Let them place Mr. Gorman's book on such a shelf. It is good midnight reading, and perhaps one can sleep off the regret that something better had not been done with it.

"Are You a Christian?"

D. L. MOODY: A WORKER IN SOULS. By GAMALIEL BRADFORD. New York: George H. Doran Company. 1927. $3.50.

Reviewed by ALLAN NEVINS

MR. BRADFORD has taken an unpromising theme. He might easily have belittled and degraded it, as is now the fashion; instead, he has magnified and elevated it. Two facts in relation to it have manifestly appealed to him. One is the bluff individuality of Moody's character: his fervent sincerity, his enormous energy, his simplicity, his determination. The other is the unquestionable truth that religion as Moody apprehended and taught it is religion as the great majority of plain Americans have always conceived it. Intellectually or theologically, no doubt, Channing or Theodore Parker or Phillips Brooks or Newman Smyth would have been more important to study than Moody. But psychologically Dwight L. Moody is more interesting, while his significance as a key to popular beliefs—to what the plain Campbellite or Methodist of Eastport, Ottumwa, and Sacramento holds sacred—is transcendentally greater. Moody and Sankey express a part of American civilization, and even a part of the mind of the race.

But this is not all; Mr. Bradford has a still deeper interest in Moody, an interest which may be called philosophical. Moody dealt in his own way with concepts—sin, eternity, God, heaven, hell—which profoundly interest and puzzle most reflecting men. His own answer to the questions they suggest, utter surrender, complete faith, is not the most subtle answer, but it is the one answer which has brought peace to millions of souls in all times since the spread of Christianity. Mr. Bradford wishes to inquire why this is so, and what is the peculiar rebirth, the peculiar harmony with unseen powers, which springs from the "conversion" which Moody made his life work. A great part of humanity—Mr. Bradford pessimistically says all humanity—is constantly fighting pain, grief, disappointment, and lassitude. The happiest and most triumphant of men, like Goethe, speak of life as not worth living; or like Anatole France, say that in all the world man is the unhappiest animal. To such people Moody offered a simple refuge, described in his statement that "I do not believe there is a spot where peace can be found except under the shadow of the cross." Those who harkened, who were converted, who believed and prayed with him, testified that he was right; they entered his refuge and found it all-sufficient. Mr. Bradford would inquire why it is that, as William James has put it, this self-surrender brings a surcease from unhappiness and tension, and places the soul in a fold "of happy relation, of calm deep breathing, of an eternal present, with no discordant future to be anxious about?"

As a character study, the book has the author's usual discernment, usual fairness, and somewhat more than his usual fulness. We are given perhaps rather too elaborate a treatment of what was, after all, a very simple personality. Moody was a burly, energetic, somewhat ignorant but highly articulate Anglo-Saxon, with a conviction that the all-important mission of his life was to save souls by old-fashioned religion from an old-fashioned hell. He spent himself under an intense sense of divine appointment. Mr. Bradford takes facet after facet of his character, and examines it until Moody is in danger of seeming much more complex than he was. He was warmly emotional—he wept at a friend's table when he heard of Henry Drummond's death. He was unselfish—he took no thought of the morrow, but depended upon friends for support, and died without an estate. He cared nothing about social rank—introduced to an eminent English noblemen before one of his revival meetings, he said, "Glad to meet you, lord; just bring up two chairs for those old ladies yonder, will you?" He felt that his way was God's way—he informed subordinates that "you will do as you are told," and when he met opposition talked about "bowling them over." He had no interest in practical reforms—he thought the woman's movement a device of the devil to withdraw attention from religion. Something sanative, uplifting, and inspiring exhaled from his very person—Woodrow Wilson has testified that, sitting down unknown in a barber's chair, he awed everyone in the shop with a sense of some fine presence.

* * *

As a social force Moody was an important figure, and Mr. Bradford quite convinces us that despite all the scoffers at revivalism, he wrought immense and to some extent lasting good in America and England. He convinces us that there is a permanent place, and a large one, for the simple religion which Moody so eloquently preached. He makes us like the man immensely, though Mr. Bradford himself confesses that he finds something brutal and disconcerting in the interrogation with which Moody staggered everybody he met: "Are you a Christian?" Where the book fails is in its occasional efforts to make the preacher seem, as we have said above, more complex than he was, or to exaggerate his intellectual consequence, or to refine too much upon some of the questions he suggests. Sometimes the volume seems like a stream trying to rise above its source. It is surely unnecessary, for example, to spend a page or two showing that this bluff, sturdy tabernacle-leader was not a mystic of the St. Teresa type. It is surely over-refinement, in discussing Sankey, whose greatest triumph was to sit at a little organ and sing his hymn "Watching and Waiting," to go into some of the subtler esthetics of music, or its subtler psychological effects. We respect Mr. Bradford for thus consistently elevating and dignifying his subject, but sometimes it is elevated a trifle too high. Moody himself would probably have resented some passages.

* * *

Yet this objection cannot be leveled against the philosophical portion of the book. This portion Mr. Bradford has enriched by a few autobiographical passages of great interest. He has shown us frankly some of his own conceptions of religion and the universe. Certain of the questions he raises can of course be answered by no one. But he both begins and ends his book by making one emphatic affirmation. It is that "God is the one supreme universal need of humanity, and that need was never more pronounced than in America today." Ignorance is a rather meaningless term when we confront the ultimate mysteries. Those who interpret God in the light of Moody's doctrines may in one sense be more ignorant than the learned and doubting theologians, but in another sense they may be far wiser. At any rate, there can be no question of the wisdom of Mr. Bradford's closing sentences. "The simple fact is that, if God does not exist, the universe is but a wilderness of barren horror. If He does exist, life should be but one long effort to know Him and to be at one with Him. Separation from Him is the most terrible punishment the mind can conceive." Nor can there be any doubt of the justice of His verdict that while other men may have ways of overcoming this separation far different from Moody's, "in his day none worked more passionately, more lovingly, and more successfully to bring God to man and man to God."

Baron de Basenval's "Spleen," which Stendhal declared to be the most charming of all the minor eighteenth century works, and Jacques Cazotte's "A Thousand and One Follies and His Most Unlooked for Lordship" have recently been added by Chapman & Hall of London to their series of eighteenth century French *boudoir romances*, edited by Mr. Vyvyan Holland. This series, which will not exceed twelve volumes of which eleven have now been issued, is limited to one thousand numbered sets, and will not be reprinted.

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The Bowling Green

Mlle. De Sombreuil

IF I should ever blossom into a writer on crime and gallantry, it would all be due to L. S. H. One day, a couple of years ago, I received a charming note from those initials (of whose identity I know nothing) asking if I would care to accept some French books that there was no room for on L. S. H.'s shelves. Somewhat tardily, and even I fear without very mannerly enthusiasm, I replied that if there were anything L. S. H. really wanted to be rid of and thought I would be excited about, I should be very happy, etc. Presently arrived a vast packing case by express. Already incapable of dealing with surplus volumes, I was so appalled at the size of the box that it lay unopened for many weeks before I had courage to find tools and burst it. And then the amazing happened. The box was stuffed full of treasures. I could fill this page several times over just in telling you what was in that box. And, knowing neither L. S. H.'s name nor address (there was a card, but I've lost it) I've never been able to say any decent word of gratitude nor describe the good times I've had.

For, among many other things of quite different sort, there were a lot of French books on crime and oddity. The Memoirs of M. Goron, for instance, the famous Parisian Chef de la Sûreté. The books of Dr. Cabanès: Curiosités de la Médecine, Poisons et Sortilèges, Les Indiscretions de l'Histoire, etc. But, most priceless of all, a long run of Bataille's annual series of Causes Criminelle et Mondaines. Of these I sing. All beautifully bound in red leather, a complete file from 1880 to 1898, dealing with every horror and humor of the erring world (as only French criminologists can) they make the Arabian Nights seem pale. There is no need for me to lament the passing of Sherlock Holmes, the ignoble dearth of good shockers. As a mine of horrid plots, an encyclopædia of low humor, or a stimulus for grisly nightmare, Bataille is the man for me. The comedy of some of his mundane causes makes our smartest weeklies mere Sunday School talk; and the purging horror of some of the crimes is far beyond the rue Morgue standard. I know now, also, where some of our modern writers on murder got their stuff.

These cases, mind you, are not literary re-writes. They are transcript of actual testimony and official proceedings. What fodder for winter nights! I hope I shan't be accused of being "quaint" when I say that to pour out a good tall one of brandy and hot water, stretch one's feet toward the fire, and settle down to the Affaire Peltzer or the Affaire Chambige, is a pretty good way to spend an evening. The real connoisseur of crime, nurtured on Causes Criminelles et Mondaines, will never again take poor darling Sherlock too seriously. I blush to admit it, but really, you rise from Bataille a better man—and thoroughly scared.

If I go steadily on, there will not be one colorful crime committed in France, from 1880 to 1898, that I don't know about (except that by excess of reading I get the details mixed, and accuse the man who only stole corpses from the cemetery of having been the one who pushed his mother-in-law into the fireplace). I shall have learned a good deal of French too, though not all of a sort that I can use. What gorgeous titles in that collection of tales. Consider:

Paris infâme: une mère proxénète
Les Trois Modistes du Comte de la Mothe
La Paternité du pharmacien Blandet
Le Vampire de Saint-Ouen
La Belle Coutelière de Thiers
La Jeune Fille au Perroquet
Les Assassins du Curé d'Armentières
Les Faiseurs d'Anges de Langogne
Le dernier amour d'un vieux turfiste
M. et Mme. Stern: un ménage américain
La Machine infernale de Saint-Julien
Une Femme Enterrée dans le champ de bataille de Waterloo
L'Homme aux 54 Enfants

If there are any tabloid publishers in the house, these ought to make their mouths water.

But these cases are not all ablative. Bataille is not all Murder and Sudden Death. If we might be permitted a little excursion into low life, I can't resist the story of Mlle de Sombreuil. Any lover of Paris must feel kindly towards her. Poor dear, how often they deported her and how resolutely she came back to the town she understood. M. Bataille calls it a "tintamaresque history" and says, rather disconsolately, that it shows what a state of social decomposition there was in the year 1886. But I think Bataille is just a little less than gallant to the lady. She hadn't much chic, which no Parisian can quite forgive. She was a blonde, perhaps that's how she got away with it.

Poor Mlle de Sombreuil. In the first place she had no birthright to the aristocratic name. Her father was a German merchant in Constantinople, and her real name was Louise Schneider. But even that we can't swear to, because (one of the amazing little by-stories that crop up in these affairs) one of her brothers swore she was a changeling. It was reputed that Herr Schneider's nurse, taking baby Louise for an airing, allowed her to fall into the Black Sea where she drowned. Afraid to confess this to her philoprogenitive employer, the nurse bought a Circassian baby and substituted it. I like this legend: if our Mademoiselle was a Circassian that will condone much. But whether Circassian or German, Bataille has to admit that she was "Parisienne et boulevardière dans le sang."

She's a little the worse for wear as we first see her in court (November 26, 1886). She gives her age as twenty-eight, but M. Bataille says the court clerk is still laughing at that. He says she looks a bit like an elderly nursemaid, her complexion is leaden and she is "insolently" powdered. She's wearing a tight little "jaquette à capuchon" (I'm not quite clear just what that looks like) and over her yellow chignon is a hat with swan's plumes—symbol of innocence, says the ironical Bataille. But her gloves are fresh and clean, and I like that in her.

Well, here you are again, says the judge, and we learn the sad fact that this is Mademoiselle's fifth appearance before the law. The first time she was given a month for blackmail; the second, a month for "détournement d'objets saisis." Does one translate that embezzling? or disposal of stolen goods? Anyhow, after the second affair she was expelled from the country as an undesirable alien. She was told to elongate herself from France. Twice already she has returned, after her elongations. Now for the third time she is back in Paris. M. Chérot, speaking for the state, says she is an adventuress. She is a dangerous and violent woman. While awaiting trial she threw a piece of bread in the matron's face and said that there would be heads broken. The case, says M. Chérot, is vulgar and sordid. It's simply a matter of a *fille entretenue*, already several times expelled, who defies the law and deserves a severe lesson.

But, as you may have suspected, there's a reason why this little story—classify it how you will—rises high enough for the pages of Bataille who requires a certain celebrity in his causes. Poor Mademoiselle happens to have been a very particular friend of M. Vergoin, a well-known lawyer and a member of the Chamber of Deputies—as we would say, a congressman. And so, treading lightly and briefly, let us follow Mademoiselle's very witty counsel, the famous Maitre Demange.

* * *

She came to Paris at eighteen, says M. Demange. Her heart was ardent, her head was hot. It was the fault of the sunshine of Circassia, he suggests. She fell in love with M. de Sombreuil, who deserted her with a baby. So perhaps our Mademoiselle did earn a right to the name she clung to, and for which M. Bataille chaffs her. What became of the baby, the report does not tell. As far as our story is concerned it falls into the Black Sea of oblivion. But M. Demange says she was a good mother, and for two years she struggled against misery. Then, a dramatic shift. A money-changer of Lyons introduced her to the wealthy M. Féder, director of a famous bank. This bank was on the verge of a crash, though poor Mademoiselle didn't know it. M. Féder installs her in a "coquettish little apartment" in the rue de Constantinople. (I seem to see a touch of sentiment here. Surely our Circassian is not as hard-boiled as they pretend.) But M. Féder's bank failed, with a resounding scandal. M. Féder skipped out and left Mademoiselle with a lot of expensive furniture unpaid. Mademoiselle, exasperated (it is M. Demange's word) tried to get money out of Marieton, the Lyons money-changer who had introduced Féder to her. Apparently her methods were direct: anyhow she was sentenced for blackmail, and also served with a decree of expulsion.

She returned to Paris to get her baggage. During her absence her effects had been sold. She tried to commit suicide: she shot herself, aiming at the heart (her region of least resistance) but the wound was not fatal. When she came out of the hospital they put her in prison for one day for not having obeyed the decree of elongation. But her mercurial temperament came to her rescue. She met a gentleman, a négociant, who evidently saw she needed building up. He took her to Tréport, that cheerful little Norman watering place. I like to imagine them there. But the money-changer heard about it. He seems to have been a skunk, that discreditable Lyonnais. There is probably more than we know behind their relations: but anyhow he was indignant to learn that she was enjoying herself at a balneary station. He had her arrested and again she was jailed for being still in France. Coming out of jail, however, she lived happily with her négociant for two years, at 14, Avenue Hoche. As the delightful Demange puts it—

Quand elle conjuque le verbe *aimer*, on la laisse en repos; mais quand l'amant, quel qu'il soit, se fatigue, on met à exécution l'arrêté d'expulsion. C'est ce qui advint encore quant le négociant eut assez d'elle. Aussitôt les agents du ministère de l'intérieur reparurent et invitèrent Mlle. de Sombreiul à déquerpir.

* * *

To M. Vergoin, the deputy, our harassed Mademoiselle had gone, with a note of introduction from her previous lawyer, to try to get some mitigation of her decree of exile. Exile from Paris, from its dear life of terrasse and apéritif, of café chantant and coquettish little apartments—not to be thought of! Oh happy days in the Avenue Hoche—sunset in the wide space round the Arc de Triomphe, and all the little dogs being taken for walks along the Avenue de Bois de Boulogne! There's an Unknown Soldier now under the Arch of Triumph, but I see our Mademoiselle as an unknown soldier too, in her own peculiar warfare. The Siege of Paris! Perhaps there *was* German blood in her.

Anyhow, to M. Vergoin she repairs. And M. Vergoin, the influential congressman, makes representations in the department of the Interior, and Mademoiselle's elongation is suspended. And as you can imagine her gratitude is warm. In the case of our Mademoiselle, gratitude takes its most personal coefficient; and besides, chic or not chic, M. le Deputé had fallen for her charms. Moreover Mademoiselle, by this time, was beginning to see the great truth that Maitre Demange points out in his witty plaidoirie. As long as she is living with someone she is safe; the moment she falls, so to speak, into the public domain, she will be elongated from the city she loves. Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Circassia.

M. Vergoin sets her up at the Hôtel des Capucines. I don't quite remember where is the Hôtel des Capucines. Is it in the street of that name? Then it's not far from the Madeleine, and also, you observe, right across the river from the Chamber—just a pleasant stroll for M. le Deputé. This was, I'll wager, a cheerful promotion for Mademoiselle de Sombreuil. No more money-changers, small négociants, defaulting bankers. Mistress of an homme de politique! What possible visions may she not have imagined? Perhaps it was to celebrate the Capucines interlude that she got the tight little jacquette à capuchon. But alas the dream was brief. M. Vergoin, the radical deputy from Seine-et-Oise, began to think seriously about his career. This little liaison might compromise him in the Chamber, where the position of a radical was unstable anyhow. Quite quietly he slipped out of Mademoiselle's sight.

By this time our heroine cannot be blamed for a certain disbelief in the intentions of the staglike sex. Issuing from her apartment at the Capucines, perhaps to walk across the Bridge of Concord and see if there were any sign of the laggard deputy, she notices herself persistently followed by two gentlemen. She calls a gendarme and protests; all three are taken to the station-house—*conducted to the violin* is the classic French phrase. There, after explanations, the horrid truth appears: the two pursuivants are plain clothes men, agents of the Minister of the Interior. Mademoiselle remains at the violin for ten days. Then she is made mount in a "cellular carriage" and is debarked en route for Circassia. She is forwarded to Marseilles, after eight lamentable tarryings in provincial prisons by the way.

(*To be continued*)

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

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Books of Special Interest

The Mind of Africa

THE AFRICAN SAGA. By BLAISE CENDRARS. Translated by Margery Bianco. Payson and Clarke, Ltd. New York. 1927. $5.

Reviewed by HARTLEY BURR ALEXANDER

THE mapping of the physical Earth is an almost completed task, but the mapping of the mind of man is little more than begun. Certainly no interest of our time is more vivid and general than is that which has for its object the modes of thought which men of all cultures have created in their efforts to achieve an understanding vision of the world in which human life is cast. We are curious about the lands and institutions of our comrade men; we are curious about their learning and their arts; but most of all we are curious as to their interpretations of life in idea and imagination. Perhaps there is a correlation between our own diminishing confidence in the perfections of our civilization and this seeking out of the secrets of life which other peoples may have discovered, but in all events none who is alert to the mind of our time can fail to be impressed by its serious and widecast effort to round into completeness civilized man's perspective of human nature.

Of all the great human populations the least known in this more revealing sense is that of austrial Africa. The peoples of Europe and Asia have reacted upon one another intimately since prehistoric times; the peoples of the Americas have been at least approachable for several centuries; the islanders of the Pacific and the sparse populations of Australia and of the Arctic, in part because of their scattered placing, have been made the subject of intimate study. But Africa has been more resistant, partly because of geographical difficulties, partly because of the density and cohesiveness of its human groups: it was the latest of the great land masses to be explored and partitioned, and it is the latest also in the order of intellectual discovery. But of its yield when understood surely some indication may be gathered from the superficial aspects of its populations, for within them are to be found the most distinctive of human types, the tallest and the shortest in the matter of stature, the most archaic and perhaps the most recent in bodily structure, a range of radical races which only Asia can match, and (who knows?) possibly a background of time reaching back to the human emergence.

"The African Saga" is, for the general public, one of the pioneer explorations into the mind of the Dark Continent. It is composed of stories, fables, riddles, songs —what bulks mainly is "folklore,"—drawn from the multitude of special reports, work of missionaries, travelers, officials, which form the materials of anthropological information, and in this volume representing some thirty tribal groups (and five or six different races) occupying territories about the rim of Africa south of the Sahara. The collection is organized into chapters, perhaps unobjectionable, but of no real assistance to the reader; for the selections in each chapter are drawn from unrelated peoples and are themselves unrelated; off-hand one would much have preferred that all the materials drawn from any one tribe or district or race or linguistic group (any such division) might have been united; and cetainly, were the book meant for scholars, the sources should have been given for each selection. There is, to be sure, a bibliography of some hundred fifty titles, but it is not related to the text, and there are no notes. All this makes the book unusable except in the one use which is known as that of the "general reader"—who surely is a half mythical thing!—and even he must bring to the subject sufficient knowledge to differentiate in imagination, as he reads, Haussa and Tshi and Fan, Zulu and Hottentot, Bechuana and Bushman, Bari and Masai.

But apart from all such reservations the collection does make a kind of whole impression that is not unjust, and from which the contours of a mind seem to emerge. It is curiously distinct from the impression to be derived, say, from a body of Mediterranean or North American or Polynesian folklore, in spite of the fact that many of the themes are identically what may be found in these other groups. Should one call it an impression of a more naïve and childlike mind? Certainly it is less reflective, less self-conscious, less philosophical. It is shrewd, humorous, dramatic, sometimes petulant, and always delightfully insouciant. One must add, too, that it is not infrequently poignantly wise. . . .

Have you sometimes seen in the forest, at night, a wandering flame which moves wavering here and there? Have you heard a woman's voice which goes far off into the distance, calling, calling beneath the branches? Do not be afraid. It is Mboya seeking her child, Mboya who seeks but can never find him. A mother never gives up.

Or again:

Things are not right as they are now. You have the earth down there, you own heaven here . . . unless you make a place for the men too it is not right. Find some way of establishing them on the earth so they can live there and light a fire that will warm heaven a bit, for it gets very cold up here when there is no fire on earth.

These are negro of the Negroes—Fan and Efik. The reader may judge, and turning to the book may discover for himself.

Past Days

TURNPIKES AND DIRT ROADS. By LEIGHTON PARKS. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1927. $3.

A MARYLAND boyhood in the late 'fifties, Southern people and customs, the coming of the Civil War, childish impressions of armies and battles—these are the materials of Dr. Parks's charming reminiscences. The rector emeritus of St. Bartholomew's was born in 1852, and he breaks off his recollections when he was twelve, in 1864. Reared in the town of Wheatland, in the hilly country of western Maryland, in his earliest years he caught the throb of the coming conflict between North and South. Once in 1859, riding out with a country doctor, the lad had seen John Brown of Ossawatomie at the little secret camp which Brown had established near the Maryland border preparatory to his attack upon Harper's Ferry. When the war began, Wheatland was garrisoned by one Federal detachment after another, and the boy always remembered a Massachusetts regiment on dress parade singing "Glory, Glory, Hallelujah" under the leadership of a stately negro woman pacing the sward in front of it. Lee's army marched past to the battlefield of Antietam; and later, in the early summer of 1863, the boy watched the Army of northern Virginia pour endlessly through to Gettysburg. Once he sat at the mess-table of Lee, Longstreet, and Hill, and Lee held him on his knee.

But it is not these memorable figures and scenes which give the book its chief importance. Its value is derived at least equally from its picture, full of literary grace, of the genial, indolent, cultured, somewhat dissipated Southern society of Maryland. The boys' parents were Southerners, his associates were Southerners, his instinctive tastes and sympathies were Southern. Nevertheless, there were Northerners about him, and his widowed mother was ardently attached to the Union. Child though he was, he realized the conflict of opinion in this border State. His comrade, the country doctor who plays so large a part in these pages, named his horse in 1861 "Stonewall," and in 1864 called him "Grant." Dr. Parks recalls not merely the general impressions, but the specific acts and words of his childhood, with singular vividness, and their recital is sometimes highly amusing. Thus he gives us a most laughable account of a murder trial in which his testimony was vital; at other times the narrative becomes suddenly impressive, as in Dr. Parks's description of how, from his hilltop home, he looked northward on July 2, 1863, toward the field of Gettysburg:

Was there ever a day so hot as the second of July of that year! I seem to feel the stillness of it now. Before noon the same mysterious cloud which had appeared during the battle of Antietam was seen again, slowly, silently mounting up to heaven, far away to the north. It was more awful than the one before because of the silence. No sound could be heard. The ever-growing cloud went up in mute significance to God. The breeze that blew when the battle of Antietam was being fought suggested conflict, action, some heroic human effort; but this was silent as a sacrifice; it was not like the work of man, but of God.

Here and there, though very rarely, is a phrase or a paragraph which sets the author down as somehow "ministerial," but this is the only defect in a remarkable study of childhood.

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Edited by

ALEXANDER C. JUDSON

The *carpe diem* philosophy of the seventeenth century is being repeated over and over again in much of our modern poetry. It is hardly strange, then, that this generation should feel a renewed interest in those poets who wrote to a sophisticated audience two centuries ago. John Donne, Richard Lovelace, Robert Herrick, and the rest were more modern than they knew.

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Books of Special Interest

Dante Reappraised

DANTE. By JOHN JAY CHAPMAN. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1927. $2.50.

Reviewed by KENNETH MCKENZIE
Princeton University

MR. CHAPMAN does not like Dante scholars and other "pedants." He admits that they are useful; but once the results of their investigations have been made known, they are to be disregarded. Himself a creative poet, he is interested in Dante only as a creative poet—in fact as one of the two greatest poets of modern times; he dwells on the distinction between Shakespeare who is "impersonal and spontaneous, all gentleness and apparent aimlessness," and Dante, "tense and personal, always full of purpose and calculation." As we read and reread Dante, he says, even if we cannot quite love him, nevertheless we grow into a respect for him that is akin to awe, until we hope that we understand him a little. "As for Shakespeare, we feel that he understands *us*." These are generalizations, of which there are many more in Mr. Chapman's book; generalizations based on long familiarity with the subject, sometimes showing insight and sympathy, but often a certain impatience with Dante for not writing more in accordance with modern taste. One recalls the saying of Ruskin, that Dante was not concerned with good taste at all, but with expressing the truth as he saw it.

It may be said that there are two types of Dante scholars,—those who investigate problems scientifically, and those who strive to illuminate Dante by an interpretation of his point of view and his relation to his times. It is sufficiently evident that Mr. Chapman's approach is not like that of either type; it would require boldness in a critic to refer to him at all as a Dante scholar, when he condemns the whole tribe so categorically. Yet he does not hesitate to say just what Dante would do in given circumstances. His book may be called an attempt to induce his readers (who are presumably also readers of Dante) to reject a large part of Dante's work which he regards as having no permanent value. "It seems possible," he says, "that Dante's lack of humor and of kindliness may shorten the skirts of his fame as time goes on, and as that passionate interest in the Middle Ages which marked the nineteenth century begins to decline." Indeed, as time goes on, parts of Dante may come to seem obsolete; yet his intense personality will keep alive an interest in the works which give it expression. "Any character that appeals to the universal dramatic sense must surely represent a type," and the type which Dante represents, according to Mr. Chapman is the Solitary Egoist,—his works are a *journal intime*, and his self-centered quality is one source of his popularity.

These observations may serve to indicate the tone of Mr. Chapman's little book of a hundred pages, which can be read at a sitting. It is divided into fifteen short chapters, the first nine of which consist partly of translations from the Divine Comedy. A "paraphrase rather than a translation," Mr. Chapman calls these renderings of "favorite passages," about a dozen cantos in all; and in fact they show little concern for the exact reproduction in English of what Dante says. Liberties are taken not only with the substance, but also with the form. Mr. Chapman uses the terza rima of the original, an obviously difficult method of translating, but from Dante's absolute regularity of rhyme-scheme he often departs. The verses read smoothly, and are perhaps as faithful as the average translation in terza rima. They raise once more the question as to what type of translation best represents a great poem. Shall we be accurate to the letter of the original, or sacrifice the letter so as to preserve some of the spirit, that is, the poetical effect? The second alternative is chosen by Mr. Chapman, with the inevitable result that we get passages of English poetry that are partly Dante and partly Chapman. A similar statement may be made about the whole book in its portrayal of Dante as seen through Mr. Chapman's eyes. Those who are already confirmed readers of Dante will find it provocative of thought; but although Mr. Chapman's independence will appeal to them, they will find themselves more often than not shaking their heads in dissent.

The Terror as It Was

ROBESPIERRE'S RISE AND FALL. By G. LENÔTRE. Translated by Mrs. Rodolph Stawell. New York: George H. Doran. 1927. $6.

Reviewed by WALTER S. HAYWARD

AS those who have read M. Lenôtre's other books dealing with the period of the French Revolution will know in advance, the present work is based upon patient research, and is filled with interesting details gleaned here and there from odd and out of the way sources. M. Lenôtre is particularly at home in the topographical features of revolutionary Paris, and in bringing out curious personal facts concerning the principal actors, such as what kind of beds they slept on, what they did in their spare time, what influences were instrumental in making them what they were.

Robespierre is, of course, the principal figure. His sudden rise to fame is traced, the emphasis being laid on the strange course of events which transformed him from an obscure, unsuccessful, unpopular country notary into the "incorruptible" dictator of the Committee of Public Safety and President of the National Convention. Lenôtre brings out particularly the events in Robespierre's past which made him what he became. He shows how the slights put upon him intensified his revengeful, suspicious nature. Robespierre is portrayed as a man bent on effacing from earth all those who had anything to do with the humiliations of his youth, a purpose which does not flinch at sacrificing his former friend and fellow revolutionist, Camille Desmoulins, and his wife Lucille. Robespierre is a man of blood, who attains his ends by the guillotine. The hold he possesses over the Commune and the people of Paris is due partly to a reputation for probity and partly to a wholesome fear of what he and his "gang" could do to opponents, having examples before their eyes daily.

Lenôtre's Robespierre is always a repellent one. His treatment is almost that of a physician who draws up a diagnosis of a patient subject to certain psychopathic disorders. The book is absolutely divested of all attempt to white-wash or sentimentalize. Yet, on the other hand, there is no attempt to make Robespierre worse than he was. With great care are brought out the traces of humanity to be found in Robespierre's relations with the Duplay family, with whom he lived during the Terror. There is also an excellent description of the Feast of the Supreme Being, caused by the strange and curious strain of religious feeling which formed an integral part of Robespierre's being.

Lenôtre is never dull, and it is no serious criticism to say that the one who reads this book should preferably have some prior knowledge of the French Revolution. In these pages the reader will find joined together some of the choicest villains which history has to offer,—men like St. Just, the crippled Couthon who had to be carried around on the back of a gendarme, Fouquier-Tinville, the public prosecutor, Herbert, Hanriot, and others of the strange and sinister figures of the Mountain. Perhaps the best part of the book is that which deals with the dramatic events of the night of the Tenth Thermidor, 1794, on which the Convention threw off the yoke of the Robespierrists, and hunted down the fallen chieftain and his followers with the implacable ferocity of avenging furies. There is also the strange tale of Catherine Theot, the Mère de Dieu, and how she was made to serve her part in Robespierre's downfall.

It is not a pleasant era portrayed in the book, and the hero of the pages is not a pleasant character, but it is far more truthful to the facts, a far better picture of the Terror as it was, than is to be found in most of the other books on the subject. The footnotes are all collected in the back of the volume—rather an unhandy place because, far from being mere references to authorities, many of them contain matter which might almost have been included in the text.

Grazia Deledda, winner of the Nobel Prize, has recently published a new novel, which if not in scene at least in general spirit, is similar to the Sardinian tales which won her popularity. The scene of "Annalena Bilsini" (Milan: Treves), is laid in the Po Valley and the story has to do with the struggle for existence on a farm where summer and winter alike bring terrible hardships. A violent love story is offset by one in a lighter vein.

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Keyserling and the New Spirit

By J. S. Collis

A NEW spirit is arising amongst us. Every day it is becoming increasingly impossible for any intelligent man to speak in the language of satire or dogma or exclusiveness. The coming generation will live under the sign of relativity, synthesis, sympathy. This may not be true of America, but it is true of every other country in the world.

It will hold good in every field of life, but in none more emphatically than in that of travelling. The age of travelling as *God's Englishman is over—even as God's* clever Englishman. Mr. Aldous Huxley is the last good writer who has failed to understand this. But the way has already been prepared by Mr. D. H. Lawrence and more deliberately by Herman Keyserling. In future the only traveller who will count will be he who can get himself into the consciousness of the various alien peoples he goes among.

"The Travel Diary of a Philosopher" is a superb example of this. Count Keyserling went round the world in order to find Count *Keyserling. By reading him it is possible* that we can discover how to find ourselves without going round the world. He was determined to make a unity of his complex being; and it seemed to him that the best way to do this was to go round the world assuming shape after shape, as it were.

He would pass from atmosphere to atmosphere and drink of its air; he would partake of philosophy after philosophy, religion after religion and drink of their spirit; he would enter into the consciousness of the Buddhist and the Brahmist, of the Confucianist, the Troist, and the American-Christian; he would assume the rôle of the Indian, the Chinaman, the Jap, and the Jonh; he would mingle in the social customs of all countries; he would bathe in the prejudices of all nations; he would saturate himself with every sort of alien influence; he would stand back and admire the unique attributes of sects and races.

He would go to the Tropics and there in the midst of its too much life and desperate luxuries of vegetation he would embrace Maya doctrine which proclaims the unreality of the world; there fettered by a too abundant Nature he would turn away his face and yearn for Nirvana. He would go to India and finding himself in the fierce free air of Indian mythology he too would worship many gods and in that atmosphere of the infinite relativity of all manifestations he too would deny appearance and seek only significance. He would go through Delhi and in the tense monotheistic atmosphere of Islam he would bow before the austerity of such a total submission to the conception of the One and Only God. He would pass through Burma and for a space would bathe his spirit in frivolity and laugh with the light-hearted ones. He would go to China where the wisdom of India has found objective expression and walking across that colossal synthesis he would feel himself to be a reactionary, a member of that universal order, and one with the conservative soil which to the Chinese peasant is his cradle his workshop and his grave. He would go to Japan to be transformed from the thinker to the visual man, exchanging his inner for his outer eye. He would sail across the Pacific Ocean and sitting alone near the bow of the boat he would, like Herman Melville on the rigging, lose his ego in the immensities and let them join with his most mystic mood.

Then he would go to America, immediately passing from a state of being to a state of becoming, from the timeless world to the world in time, from membership with nature to a denial of it, from divine content to divine discontent, from detachment to attachment, from the conception of all appearances being equally worthless to that of all appearances being equally valuable, from inwardness to outwardness, from self-surrender to self-assertion, from where all things are relative to where all things are absolute.

Thus he would journey. Thus he would stretch his mind. He would let extremes play their polarity upon his soul. At one time he would be prepared to sit at table with Indians who are satisfied with a dish of rice three times a day, and at another with Chinese who might offer him a dinner of forty courses starting with a plate of maggots. He would allow his mind to be carved by the spirit of the Confucian who only wants the possible no less than by the spirit of the West that demands the impossible. He would open his mind equally to those who set themselves the goal of personal perfection, as to those who could say through the mouth of their prophet "If thou hearest that a mountain has been moved believe it; but if thou hearest that a man has changed his character, do not believe it." He would acknowledge the bravery of those who determined to conquer circumstance, and also of those who could submit in proud discipline to destiny saying, "It is written. What must be, will be, Allah be with me!" While applauding the words of Mahomet, "The differences of opinion in my congregation are a sign of divine compassion," he still would seek to see the positive side of the Christian, who could only embrace one formulation. Yes, he would look for the positive element everywhere, in the cruelty of the Chinese *no less than in the compassion of the* Christian, in the hour of sickness or blindness no less than in the hour of health. He would discern the same purity of feeling behind the Eastern women bowing low before the lingam as behind the Spanish nun prostrated in adoration before the ideal of the Immaculate Conception.

He would thus listen to the symphony arising from the orchestra of many voices. And so when he had completed the circle and arrived home, after having worshipped at every shrine and saluted the image of truth in every manifestation, it would be strange indeed if from out this multiplicity of impressions he did not win through to a higher unity of being.

And shall I add, with the complete certainty of stating a fundamental truth, that *if we do in ordinary life what he sought* to do in travel, we too will find, perhaps make, our souls?

HB

The NEW BOOK by

PHILIP GUEDALLA

AUTHOR OF "PALMERSTON," ETC.

Conquistador

JOHN DRINKWATER *says*:

"If I were an American I should derive a peculiar satisfaction from Mr. Guedalla's book. For he has a very deft, inquisitive mind, and under all his gaiety and agreeable badinage there lies the historian's uncompromising loyalty to truth. Its temper is never destructive. Readers cannot but be grateful to a traveller who with so much wit and discretion adds weight to the attack that the best mind of America itself is delivering with daily determination. His very personal and effective style is steadily becoming more disciplined. This was evident in the later chapters of *Palmerston* and in *Conquistador* we find a greatly gifted writer becoming yet more surely master of himself."

THE LONDON TIMES *says*:

"He is always looking about him for historical romance, of more authentic flavour than that which is concocted in that 'mad cathedral,' the soaring Hollywood studio, and when he finds it he welcomes it in his most attractive style. He prefers to let America speak for herself when he is not able to speak in praise. His eye is wonderfully fresh, and his outlook is pre-eminently that of the artist."

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A German Diplomat

AMERIKANISCHE BRIEFE. By Kurd von Schlözer. Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt. 1927.

LETZTE ROMISCHE BRIEFE. By Kurd von Schlözer. Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt. 1927.

THE publication of the correspondence of the Von Schlözer family proceeds apace. Not long since it was Karl von Schlözer, German diplomat in numerous posts, whose volume, "Menschen und Landschaften," was reviewed here on March 26th last. Now it is his uncle, already well-known as the writer of the delightful "Römische Briefe," who appears with two continuation-volumes, each containing the letters he wrote from his diplomatic posts, to his mother, his brother, to intimate friends, with no immediate thought of publication, and therefore with a complete lack of reserve and stiffness. The Romanized German is a pleasing and not uncommon type, and in the category Kurd von Schlözer is one of the best examples. To him the Eternal City was a second home. He was not a Catholic, he had no pretensions to out-of-the-way classical or archæological knowledge. He was simply a cultured man with a very lively appreciation of the fascination of Rome, and we know from one of the letters about him printed in the second volume, that he had a distinct *flair* for interesting historical facts buried in that vast library which is the stones, the manuments, the churches of Rome.

Kurd von Schlözer was called away from Rome shortly before the fall of the Temporal Power, of whose last years he left such a vivid and well-informed picture in his earlier letters. His chief, the Chancellor Bismarck, who had such a high appreciation of his merits, sent him as first Minister to Mexico after the tragic end of the Emperor Maximilian. His precise mission was to negotiate a commercial treaty and in this he was successful. Of this side of his life, however, he gives little, and his letters are chiefly filled with lively descriptions of landscape, parties, picturesque personalities. He visited the silver mines, had interesting experiences in Cuba, lived exciting and anxious times with the German colony in Mexico when the fate of the Franco-Prussian War was in the balance and news was so slow to come by. Having got the ratifications of his treaty through he was appointed to Washington, where he stayed ten years, under three Presidents. From this post, however, his letters are scanty and not very informative, and again and again we trace the homesickness for Rome, for his friends foregathering in the Hotel d'Angleterre. At length this *Sehnsucht* was to be satisfied, and from Rome he was to write pages where, in Washington and New York, he had written only perfunctory lines.

Diplomatic relations between Germany and the Pope had been broken off in 1872. In the meanwhile the *Kulturkampf* had been raging; Bismarck had entered upon his great attempt to subordinate the Roman Catholic clergy to the state. The result was disastrous for both sides. On the one gaols full of recalcitrant priests, episcopal sees unoccupied, religion neglected, the material interests of the Church devastated; on the other a disunited nation. Despite the "Nach Canossa gehen wir nicht" something had to be done to escape from the deadlock, and the ascent of the Papal throne by the statesmanlike Leo XIII seemed to offer an opportunity. Kurd von Schlözer was therefore sent back once more to his beloved Rome to begin the work of reconciliation. He had the advantage of numerous friendships with influential personalities of the Roman Curia; he appreciated, too, the importance of the Papacy as one of the "imponderabilia" of politics, and he was very conscious of the weakness of his own side—in fact, the language of his private letters about the May Laws and more especially their ruthless application is of the strongest. Under Bismarck's instructions he used the official visit of the Crown Prince Frederick as the first step to a *rapprochement*. Then came the German-Spanish dispute over the Caroline Islands, which the Pope was invited to adjudicate. One of the ambitions of the Papacy was realized, and the cordiality of the subsequent compliments exchanged between Leo XIII and Bismarck was something more than formal—it marked the acceptance by the Pope of the fact of a strong united Germany. Much ground remained to be traversed; the Centre Party were continually working against Bismarck and depreciating his Minister to the Holy See. But slowly, patiently, the aim was pursued until at last, in 1887, the anti-Catholic laws were repealed, and the *innere Spaltung* of the German nation was ended, the Centre transformed from foe to friend. Not very long before the Pope had consented to appoint a non-Pole as Archbishop of Posen, and this was regarded by France as a triumph for Prussian diplomacy.

Kurd von Schlözer was to stay on in Rome for five years more, but his most important work was done. New conditions were coming about both in Rome and in Germany—in the former the rise of Cardinal Rampolla and the revival of French influence, in Germany the accession of a young and obstinate Emperor. The Kaiser's first audience caused Kurd von Schlözer considerable trouble; it was allowed to be interrupted by a member of the imperial suite and at its conclusion the Emperor, at the Quirinal, pronounced a speech which was regarded as at least tactless by the Vatican. It was not long before Bismarck's position was undermined, and when he fell the Minister he had created and used was asked to resign. This he did in 1892, taking his leave with a eulogy from the Pope and a consciousness that, despite the *Kulturkampf*, the fall of the Iron Chancellor, who had been clearsighted enough to recognize his mistake and strong enough to rectify it, was regretted hardly anywhere so much as in the palace of the Vatican.

Giuseppe Prezzolini is now doing for Italy what Strachey, Maurois, and Ludwig have done so successfully for their respective countries—that is writing romantic biography. His "Vita di Nicolo Machiavelli Fiorentino" (Milan: Mondadori) is a vivid and entertaining volume, full of the author's own personality, colored by his prejudices and theories, and portraying the Florentine in the light of his city and of its incarnation in the present rather than dwelling on the facts of his life and his era. The book is written with dash and enthusiasm, in a style to which the Italian genius lends itself more readily than would translation into English.

Announcement has just been made by the American-Scandinavian Foundation that in the future W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., will act as publishers and distributors for them. Two books will be published under this arrangement in the spring: "Norway's Best Stories: An Introduction to Modern Norwegian Fiction," and "Sweden's Best Stories: An Introduction to Modern Swedish Fiction." A similar volume in Danish fiction will follow in the autumn. These books, which include in their contents critical introductions and biographical material on the authors represented, are edited so as to form a substantial approach to present-day writing in Scandinavia. . . . Editorial decisions are made by the Foundation's Publication Committee of which W. W. Laurence, Professor of English, Columbia, is chairman. Among the other members are Hanna A. Larsen, Editor of *The American-Scandinavian Review*, Henry Goddard Leach, Editor of *The Forum*, and James Creese, Secretary of the Foundation.

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

Art

THE CATHEDRALS OF FRANCE. By T. FRANCIS BUMPUS. Stokes. 1927. $10.

It is hard to see for what public this book is intended. Its archeological details are dry reading even for an architect; its photographs obvious and not sufficiently clear to serve as material for the archeologist or student; and a book which has no account and no illustrations of Laon or Noyon or Senlis can make no claim to being a complete guide book or book of reference no matter what the reason given for their omission. The water colors scattered through the pages are exactly those one would expect to accompany a text whose every paragraph contains its appropriate and conventional Latin tag, and in which "Swan song" always appears as *cantum cygni*.

Fiction

THE LLANFEAR PATTERN. By FRANCIS BIDDLE. Scribners. 1927. $2.

If ever there was a saga of Philadelphia it is "The Llanfear Pattern," and Francis Biddle has certainly the ideal training and background from which to write it. A lawyer, a former assistant United States District Attorney in Philadelphia, and one of the most brilliant conversationalists in that city, he has found time besides to publish a volume of unusual verse and organize the Foreign Policy Association.

Now appears his first novel, a bede-roll of the Philadelphia of yesterday. One reads there of Dexter's, John G. Johnson, Baptiste, the "busy-body" mirrors in the windows, the crime of living north of Market Street, the marble steps thrust out on the sidewalks—the book is of the very essence of Philadelphia.

The story itself is a study of futility. Carl Llanfear, the hero, marries a foreign wife and comes back resolved to combat the conservatism and the complacency of his family and his city. At first he fights against it but little by little it overcomes him. Even his love-affairs smack of the Statue and the Bust.

"'Winny . . . You're adorable. But not now?"

She looked him squarely in the eyes. "I think you're all talk," she said, wheeled about, and walked away from him. He hesitated, shrugged, and turned in the other direction, toward home.'"

Carl tries politics and is disgusted with its sordidness. Little by little he settles smugly into the position which he was born to occupy and the waters of complacency and conservatism close over his head.

The story is interesting and the characters are vividly drawn by a good craftsman but one hopes that in his next book Mr. Biddle may devote his talent to a study in achievement, which occasionally exists even in Philadelphia.

NEW WINE: A Nocturne in Tinsel. By GEOFFREY MOSS. Doran. 1927. $2.

Post-war Bucharest is the background for this, Mr. Moss's third novel, and the tawdry, pitiful scene becomes richly interesting. In fact, "New Wine" holds our attention chiefly because the author treats his comic-opera setting with consideration; he gives it the honor of an honest portrait. Probably the quiet tragedy that is the theme of the novel would have seemed less important, less fundamental, if it had been played in Bloomsbury or in Washington Square; as it is, the brave Toni and her invalid husband, Jim, are silhouetted memorably against the Rumanian cabaret and the half-peasant, half-diplomatic life of the Balkan capital. Mr. Moss writes easily and honestly; characters of genuine humanity move through his pages; he gives us pathos without fustian. Some readers will complain of a long preliminary stretch of narrative before events begin to shape themselves significantly; others will say that the end of the novel is lazily inconclusive. But "New Wine" is never inconsequential. It is, on the contrary, adroit in the exposition of character and sensitive to the subtleties of time and place.

THE PORTRAIT INVISIBLE. By JOSEPH GOLLOMB. Macmillan. 1928. $2.

Mr. Gollomb, evidently a hitherto unpublished writer of mystery novels, makes in "The Portrait Invisible" a diverting bow to the vast number of readers who clamor for new-fashioned murders and new-fashioned detectives. Perhaps most important of his accomplishments is his creation of a character whom readers will wish to meet again. This eccentric intellectual, known as the Goldfish, is a student of human motive and conduct, interested in the criminal's abnormality, not in his crime. Therefore the ordinary criminal-police-detective relationships are not once again dragged out and polished up. Mr. Gollomb writes more intelligently than the author of the routine murder story; he actually can hold us from our night's sleep until we complete his final chapter. That was the very definite experience of the writer of this notice. Our only quarrel with the story is that the plot is slightly maltreated in the interests of the reader's sensibilities; the obvious murderer is unfairly exonerated. But this poor sportsmanship on the part of Mr. Gollomb does not lessen the entertainment value of the book; it remains an original, exciting narrative of crime, with more emphasis upon the abnormalities of human conduct than upon the detection of the murderer.

THE ELLINGTON BRAT. By BERTHA K. MELLETT. Dodd, Mead. 1928. $2.

Here, once again, is the fable of the rich girl who believed that money would buy her anything in the world, but learned at last that the object she most desired was beyond her possession. The present variation of the theme is modernized and brightened by the caperings of giddy youngsters addicted to hip flasks, rowdy wisecracks, necking parties, sport roadsters, and other appendages of juvenile sin. The acknowledged leader of this festive crew, by virtue of her scandalous daring and her position as the only child of a multi-millionaire, is Loretta Ellington, the brat, a detestable virago of twenty afflicted with delusions of personal omnipotence. When her equally disagreeable father retires from industrial life to assume the duties of Senator from Pennsylvania, Loretta takes up her abode with him in Washington, where the greater portion of her hysterical performance is gone through. Toward the close, of course, she is fed a bitter purgative pill, though the dose is far from stiff enough punishment to compensate the victims of her pestiferous high-handedness. One is not asked to like Loretta—a favorable regard of her seems impossible—but one must own that her portrait is disturbingly clear and that her story is wholly within the bounds of credibility.

THE BLOODY POET. A Novel about Nero. By DESIDER KOSTOLANYI. Translated out of the German by CLIFTON P. FADIMAN. Macy-Masius. 1927. $2.50.

To arrive at anything like a just estimate of this book one should be able, on the one hand, to read it in the original and, on the other, to command a rather thorough knowledge of Rome during the first century. The present reviewer falls short in both requirements. The novel, one must believe, suffers not a little by translation. The English into which it has been done is, one feels certain, inferior to the language in which it was originally written. Hence it is that the undistinguished style, stark, strained, self-conscious, and at times laborious and wooden, at once retards the author's conception and belies his ability as a novelist.

It seems but fair, therefore, to base one's opinion of "The Bloody Poet" largely upon the effect produced by the subject matter rather than upon the means of its presentation. Surely that effect is consistent in its rising tide of horror actuated by Nero's frenzied discovery in the very early pages that he is a poet. Henceforth, as a poet he becomes in the words of Seneca, his tutor, the real spirit of evil, for to the poet "everything in the world is merely creative material." By a series of murders, each more horrible than its predecessor, he incarnadines "multidinous seas," and by lustful orgies and abominations hardly less murderous he fulfils Seneca's baleful prophecy. Even a reader well nourished on the historical novels so much in vogue a quarter of a century ago must regard this portrait of the most execrable of Caesars as completely definitive!

But the best of the book is hardly found even in such consistent portraiture. Such cataclysmic horrors prove their own undoing. Their crimson hue pales. One suspects them of falsehood. True as they undoubtedly are, they lose their reality. For neither the novelist nor his critic

(Continued on page 577)

IRON & SMOKE

BY SHEILA KAYE-SMITH

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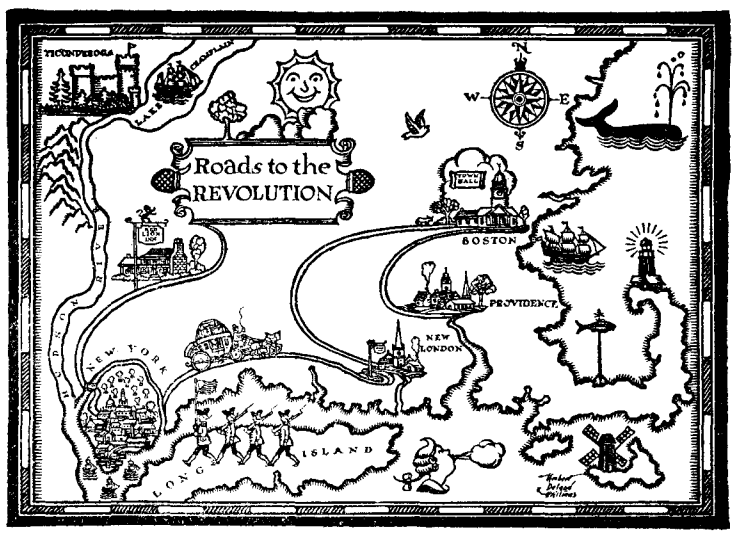

ROADS TO THE REVOLUTION

By Sarah Comstock

These little journeys over the historic spots and landmarks of the Revolutionary War, says the *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, "have all the charm of travelers' tales told in the chimney corner." The book is a friendly fellow traveler—it is anecdotal, delightfully intimate, and very informative in its method of tracing the trails of war around Boston, New York and Philadelphia. The text is supplemented by many photographs of famous scenes.

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by

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author of
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Notes on a Learned Profession

By WILSON FOLLETT

III. PUBLISHERS AND AUTHORS

THE one essential fact about publishers which needs to be advertised, then, is that those of them who have real ability and real adaptedness to their work—and this includes, without doubt, the majority, and quite all of those who set the pace and determine the standards—have chosen their career for the simple and wholly creditable motive that they love books above any other thing that could be made the nucleus of a life-work. They are, in effect, paying money for the privilege of doing what they want to—which is, of course, *worth* money. If anyone thinks that publishing is, as businesses go, conspicuous for the inordinate profit to be had from it, a trifling amount of statistical investigation will undeceive him; and if anyone thinks that the successful publisher of to-day is not a good enough business man to pile up a fortune in finance or in some relatively simple species of manufacturing, a very slight personal acquaintance with a few publishers will set him right.

The truth is that ordinary business—e.g., the manufacture of some standardized and trade-marked article which large numbers of persons indubitably want, and for which the demand is continuous and more or less predictable—is not difficult enough to be interesting to the type of man a publisher is. Not only has he gone in for an occupation which requires close study of human nature and public sentiment—acquaintance with humanity *in the mass*—but he has also committed himself to a calling which involves the maximum of delicate adjustments with a great variety of individuals, many of them among the most cantankerous of humankind. (Of authors specifically, more in a moment.) And not only this: in so far as he is a manufacturer he is putting out and vending, say, two hundred different articles in a twelvemonth, every one of which calls for a separate and distinct selling effort; he is committed to succeeding ones, and is already manufacturing them, before he has any clue to the demand for the immediately preceding ones; and he has hardly any guide better than blind intuition to tell him how brisk and extensive a demand to prepare for—a set of conditions which would turn the average business man gray in his early thirties. Yet under this punishment the publisher keeps his temperamental equilibrium and rather lives to a ripe age; he can even be heard whistling *sotto voce* at his work.

The typical member of the profession is the same kind of book-lover, save only for the gift of articulacy, out of which authorship is made. Books, and love of them, he learned before his university period; as an undergraduate he took mainly the courses in languages and literature; and to some sort of life-long association with books he was committed before he received his bachelor's degree. He then served an apprenticeship with an established publisher or two, already resolved that he would go in for himself if after a reasonable number of years he could see his way through the first few steps. If unusually astute, he probably divided his apprenticeship between one of the larger, older, more firmly entrenched houses and a smaller, more individualistic concern; through the former he would come into contact with a great part of the literary world and learn the basic organization of the book business in all its divisions, and through the latter he would gain many ideas about small economies and, more important, about the strategy of handling special kinds of books in necessarily small editions.

When, about to start for himself, he consulted the more experienced of his friends, they told him with one consent that he would be a rash fool to begin without enough backing to lose money imperturbably for his first several seasons. What sustained him through this tight passage was his private vision of certain predestined kinds of publishing that were not yet being done, and that he could perhaps do. In fine, a creative impulse. If, negatively, any two things are clear about him at this stage, they are, first, that he was not asking for money, "as much and as quickly as possible," and secondly that he was not trying to find a royal road. He knew that he had a hard row to hoe, and for the first several seasons he was his own manufacturing man, editorial department, bookkeeper, copy-writer, and traveling salesman. One reason why, to-day, his department heads respect him so much more than his stenographer does is that they know he could do any one of their jobs, if he had the time, better than it is being done, whereas she has a tool in her kit that he lacks.

He is making his mistakes, like anybody, and judging them himself more severely than anybody else does. But he is also making a sound, original, self-respecting, creative contribution to the intellectual and æsthetic life of his city, his country. He likes to think of himself as a realist, a skeptic, and an implacable enemy of all that is sentimental. So, intellectually, he is. Yet the fact remains that, financially speaking, he is not yet out of the woods; and probably, by comparison with the promoter, the stockbroker, or the virtuoso of plumbing fixtures, he never will be. Part of his satisfaction is the knowledge that, by the nature of things, his work is such that he has to do it for a selected, a very superior one-fifth of the population.

So much, based on fairly confidential and prolonged knowledge of all sorts and conditions of publishers, is anything but a composite photograph of the publishing scoundrels of the national mythology. And every other kind of ascertainable fact about respectable publishing and its usages bears out the delineation here suggested.

It is, of course, in connection with the publisher's relations with his authors that he is most often charged with unscrupulousness—and most often not by authors themselves. A few of these gentry—and (Bierce's word) ladry—are chronic publisher-baiters, and these make more noise on the subject than all the rest put together. Also, every author has a natural tendency to deplore the necessity of his being on the same publisher's list with other authors; it prevents him from receiving one hundred per cent of the house's attention and efforts, which—again naturally—he would regard as about his due. But everyone understands that the ideal condition, one publisher to one author, is mostly unattainable in this imperfect world; and in the main an author is prepared to see the works of some of his fellow writers published, advertised, and even sold by the publisher of his own books. He will even rise occasionally to the pitch of saying kind words about them, though he feels that this is almost too good-natured of him.

In the main, then, authors are philosophic and resigned about publishers, and seem to understand that the best is being done for them individually that is humanly possible—i.e., compatible with the other things that the publisher has also to do. And if the public is sadly miseducated (as it is) about the relations generally obtaining between authors and publishers, this is the simple consequence of human officiousness. An author has, unfortunately, a friend; this paragon has another friend, also unfortunately an author, whose publisher gave him a better contract than Author No. 1 has just received, or sold for Author No. 2 more copies of a worse book. Author No. 1 has been gypped by his publisher; the friend says so, goes about saying so—makes a business of it. Any author so unhappy as to have a friend does well to tell the friend to work at his regular job and try not to be a fool. The friends of authors seem to be the natural custodians—by which is meant destroyers—of the fair fame of publishers.

Or it is a lady novelist, and she has a husband. Wives of authors are commonly invisible and inaudible; they stay at home—like the furniture except that they speak when spoken to. But the husbands of authoresses are something else again. If you hear that the brilliant Miss So-and-so, whose "Attar of Wormwood" sold 80,000 copies last year, was never paid a cent beyond her small advance on signing the contract, all it means is that Miss So-and-so has a husband, and that he has beeen getting in his deadly work where it counts. The wife of an author knows that her husband is only a special breed of child, and she treats him accordingly. But the husband of an authoress is the proprietor and showman of a genius, one of the trained seals of literature. He worships her; and *whatever* she receives in recognition or in pay, he is going to tell the world that she is being systematically robbed of her due.

Perhaps this is a good enough place to note that lady novelists are the one great exception to every truism here pointed out about the good-nature, long-suffering restraint, and human kindness of publishers, who heartily wish it were sociologically feasible to have all feminine writers, with one exception, hanged by the neck. The one exception, not to be named here, has grown into a holy legend in all the publisher's offices of the English-speaking world. Her illustrious name is breathed with reverence by the entire fraternity, and with hushed adoration by the publisher so favored among mortals as to have it above the imprint on his own title-pages—the name of this unique woman novelist who is unquestionably not insane and with whom it is possible to do business on a rational basis. (By the way, her books do not sell overwhelmingly.) I dare cite her here, because each lady novelist of my acquaintance will understand instantly that she herself is the one, and thus I shall escape much woe.—*Any* author about to have a novel has to be treated with superhuman delicacy, as nobody knows better than the publisher; but practically every woman novelist has to be treated that way all the time. It is a great strain. There is a close connection between modern publishing and the rapid spread of misogyny.

Fooling aside, and lady novelists aside, the normal modern relation of a publisher to his author consists of obligations willingly incurred and scrupulously discharged, in a spirit wholly independent of the contract which presumably exists to define them.

At this point a fact of some importance is to be noted: namely, that under actual pressure a book contract is binding upon only one of the parties to it. The publisher is committed to certain things so long as the contract is in force; the author is committed only so long as he prefers to be. The publisher can never afford to breach a contract, however, disastrous to his interests its terms may prove: to do so would instantly destroy his reputation in a limited but all-important circle which really knows something about his affairs; he is strictly dependent on this circle for his existence, and—he is hoping to exist for a long time to come. The author, on the other hand, can do almost anything with impunity. Nothing that could ever be got out of him by force would be worth half the fuss of getting it, not to speak of the name for truculence that the publisher would infallibly incur by demanding his obvious rights, or the interruption by legal processes of regular business for which the working day is already insufficient.

But all this is from a semi-legalistic point of view which has no actual bearing on how a publisher feels about keeping his engagements. He keeps them because he wants to. And he wants to for a reason so simple that it has quite escaped the attention of the suspiciously inclined: namely, that they are the engagements which he expressly wanted to make in the first place. He has made them on his own initiative, with eyes open, and he has kept their terms within his probable future ability to discharge them. What more natural, then, than that they should continue to represent his wishes? Contrary to popular assumption, a book contract is not written as a legal bulwark of anyone's rights: it is written simply as the memorandum of an agreement which, in complex modern conditions, involves too many points to be covered easily enough or explicitly enough in correspondence.

As to the question of common honesty, frequently raised both by those who should know better and by those who know nothing, and usually in the form of insinuations that publishers understate the actual sales in the royalty reports, it is not necessary to say much here. An author has free access on demand (though the public seems not to realize this) to all of his publishers' bookkeeping that has anything to do with himself; a certified public accountant reviews all the bookkeeping at least once a quarter, with a microscopic technicality which would do credit to a bank examiner; and the head bookkeeper of a publishing firm could briefly convince any intelligent investigator of the records and vouchers that to falsify the returns by even a trivial amount would be a sheer impossibilty. The only way in which a publisher can rob authors (short of not trying to sell their work, which is sabotage against himself) is to refrain from sending out any royalty statements at all, or to withhold the checks corresponding to his royalty statements. If he does either, he does not last long in the world of publishing. Manhattan Island recently enjoyed the obituary notices of a publisher who had made his momentary splash by paying advances against which a sound publisher could not compete, and then letting the authors whistle for their semi-annual statements.

The essential basis of a publisher's attitude toward his authors is his pride in them and his loyalty to them. His pride is far from being centered in those who make him money: he feels it most for those whose work he thinks may continue to live. And his loyalty is equally far from being confined it to those whose books he can well afford to issue. I have seen a publisher continue with an author for season after season of abject failure, with nothing whatever to compel him to do it except enough confidence in his own taste to believe that the public would eventually agree with him. (Sometimes the public does so in the long run: but usually, before that comes, the author himself tires of the *impasse* and betakes himself to a different publisher—who, by the way, knows that he is going to reap the fruit of a lot of work that he has not done himself, and who sometimes does reap it in the shape of an instant huge success.) After all, the creative publisher is trying to *build up* a literary property, not to inherit one; and, as I have hinted before, the chickens that can be counted before they are hatched are not very interesting to him. His real adventure is to see life emerge from the egg that everyone thought was infertile.

It will be deemed that some of the foregoing is a little rasping in its implications about the characteristics of authors. Well, an author is a person who writes books, Writing books is a solitary occupation. If an author is a real person in his books and gets the best of himself and his powers expressed there, I do not know by what right or reason he can be required to have preeminent grace left over for the comparatively trivial remaining part of his life; and if he does have and exhibit them, everyone feels that it is slightly miraculous. Let him write great books, and we are all ready enough to forgive him for being a sulky child or a hysterical old woman—to make allowance for his delusions of persecution and his delusions of grandeur. With a publisher it is different. His work is social, in the sense that a large fraction of it consists of personal relations which must be as urbane as he can make them. If, as to general reasonableness—not to speak of manners—every publisher did not treat every author infinitely better than most fairly successful authors treat their publishers, a lot fewer books would see publication.

Nevertheless, a good many authors, some of them among the truly important, do have the sense to understand the value of filling their publishers' lives with sunshine, and also the good-nature to do it. Not long ago a writer whose books are financially very profitable and whose name carries great weight—two circumstances not commonly associated—was called up by his publisher, who said: "My bookkeeper has just discovered that we never sent you a contract for that book that we published last week, and he's badgering me about it. What terms shall I write into it?" "Seventy-five per cent. on the first hundred copies," said the author, "ninety per cent. thereafter, and an indemnity of five dollars a copy for all copies of the first printing that remained unsold forty-eight hours after publication." The publisher, who knew his man, sent by messenger a contract duplicating the terms of that for the latest preceding book. It came back, signed, by the same messenger, in less time than it would have taken to read it through.

I had occasion lately to look up the contract for one of the enormously successful novels of a recent season. It had been hurriedly executed outside the office, on the eve of a journey taken by the author; and to my astonishment it was the next thing to no contract at all. I found it dated the blank day of blank, in a (printed) year far from that in which I knew it to have been signed; the clause calling for a reduced royalty on quantity orders of more than a certain number of copies at more than a stipulated discount was left unfilled; and most staggering of all, the contract proved to have been executed for a different book entirely—one that to this day has never been written!

The queer part of it was that this same novel presently became subject to a huge quantity order at a discount which would normally have reduced the publisher's debt to the author by something like three-fifths. Everyone, including the author, assumed without looking that the quantity-order clause had been filled in with some such usual figure as 499 or 999. And did the publisher let himself off with payment of the rate which, as he assumed, the contract required of him? On the contrary, he proposed to the author, on his own initiative, a rate of payment two-thirds greater, describing it as all that the traffic would bear. So far as I know, neither author nor publisher has yet taken a look at the scrap of paper to ascertain his technical rights. But there is *one* novelist who is not likely to change publishers right away.

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The New Books

Fiction

(*Continued from page 575*)

should care a fig for any truth save the dramatic and esthetic. That truth, that reality, is at its best in the quiet, tragic scene which describes Burrus, the old commander of the Emporer's body-guard, as he returns at night to the place of encampment under the walls of Rome. Unjustly accused of conspiracy, he takes his slow farewell of "the imortal army of an immortal city" while the camp sleeps and a storm rises. And here, fortunately for us, the translator is at his best! Would there were more scenes like this one in three hundred and forty-four pages!

History

A Short History of Great Britain Since 1714. By *R. B. Mowat.* Oxford University Press. $1.25.

Elementary Building Science. By *Alfred Everett.* Oxford University Press. $2.50.

A History of Christian-Latin Poetry. By *F. J. E. Raby.* Oxford University Press. $7.

James B. Duke, Master Builder. By *John Wilber Jenkins.* Doran. $4 net.

A Miscellany of Facts and Pamphlets. Oxford University Press. 80 cents.

International

State Security and the League of Nations. By *Bruce Williams.* John Hopkins Press. $2.75.

International Trade. By *F. W. Taussig.* Macmillan.

The Chinese Puzzle. By *Arthur Ransome.* Houghton Mifflin. $2.

Peace in Europe. By *Augur.* Appleton.

Juvenile

(*For the Children's Bookshop see next page*)

"Hurricane Harbor," by Helen Von Kolnitz Hyer (Marshall Jones: $1.75), stands out in a group of girl's books of the late fall by reason of its inherent interest, whereas the other nine depend for existence in two cases upon rehashed daily events and in nine upon exterior mystery and surprise. "Hurricane Harbor" pleases by presenting the intrinsic vivacity of life for a charming circle of boys and girls in a setting brightly novel to most young people, to wit, Charleston, South Carolina. Events happen in plenty, but between the high spots the story runs merrily enough, with a style always clear and winning. And here we find delicately done in the close sympathy between June and David the idealistic relationship between sexes that happens so naturally in the teens if given half a chance. Altogether the author of this book has a good deal of attractive reality within her grasp. Now for the other nine: "Joy and Pam," by Dorothy Whitehill (Barse & Hopkins), consists chiefly of pages hard for the eye because of the great mass of conversation about a birthday, a fair, and other daily happenings. "Mother's Away," by Margaret Ashmun (MacMillan: $1.75), is a really pleasant account of how well two children do while mother's away. As for the tales built on a surprise: "A Citizen of Nowhere," by Edith Ballinger Price (Greenberg: $2), leads a boy who is a misfit on a Maine island to his rightful heritage in a French château. The story is told so adequately that its essential lack of individuality does not strike one till later. In "Janny," by Jane Abbott (Lippincott: $1.75), a slip of paper discovered by the young heroine means a fortune to the city cousins who have scorned the country mouse. The book is smoothly written and is quite appealing. Likewise, "The Shadow on the Dial," by Augusta Huiell Seaman (Century: $1.75), reveals a long-lost will when most needed. Mrs. Seaman's stories always run with excellent smoothness on a finished surface. "The Mystery of Saint's Island," by Harriette R. Campbell (Harper: $1.75), is rather dynamic in its Scottish atmosphere and swift style. It ends a feud between families by the finding of a victim in isolation on a mysterious island. Another similar discovery, this time of a war-lost memory in a cave, in "Deehdah's Wonderful Year," by Hildegarde Hawthorne (Appleton: $1.75), gives plot to two little girls' wanderings in Europe, which are told, however, in so sprightly a fashion that we wonder whether the plot does not merely reclaim for trite mystery an attempt interesting if hurriedly slight at an undidactic travel-book for girls. Finally, two books belong primarily to the surprise-package category, but have a good deal of everydayness, too. "Feodora," by Eleanor M. Jewett (Barse & Hopkins, $1.50), somewhat startlingly enlivens a narrative of life in a girl's camp in the usual happy summer [illegible] with wild tales of disaster told in explanation of a treasure trunk by a temperamental young Russian refugee. "Hat May," by Lucy Thurston Abbott (Barse & Hopkins: $1.25), pushes mystery into a Spanish background which persists in little Hat May's picturesqueness amidst a very usual New England life. The story has a good deal of humanity about it. In this group, lost relatives and wills, local color and dips into European atmospheres seem to have supplanted the habitual boarding-schools. On the whole, the change is somewhat inspiriting, though not perhaps in the direction of reality. At least, it shows a desire to enliven a product usually none too vivacious.

The Fairy Goose. By *Liam O'Flaherty.* New York: Crosby Gaige. $6.

The Cross Stitch Heart and Other Plays. By *Rachel Field.* Scribners. $1.25.

Recitations for Younger Children. By *Grace Gaige.* Appleton. $2.

The Midnight Folk. By *John Masefield.* Macmillan. $2.50.

Miscellaneous

BEAUTY IN GARDENS. New York: William Edwin Rudge. 1928.

With a brief introductory note setting forth the historical background of American gardens, and fairly voluminous captions epitomizing the main considerations governing the arrangements depicted in its illustrations this slim but handsomely made book furnishes a brief pictorial commentary upon American landscape gardening. Its plates amply attest to the loveliness that has been achieved of late years in the grounds of American homes. It is "to pay a tribute to the genius of American landscape architecture" that this book is published.

SAPLINGS. Second Series. Pittsburgh: Scholastic Publishing Co. 1927. $1.50.

This collection of verse, short stories, and essays was selected from manuscripts written by high school students in competition for the annual Scholastic Awards, including the Witter Bynner Scholastic Poetry Prize, conducted by *The Scholastic*, a national high school magazine. The contributions have come from various states of the Union and the level of expression is noteworthy.

National Character. By *Ernest Barker.* Harpers. $3.50.

The Science of Society. By *William Graham Sumner* and *Albert Galloway Keller.* Vol. III. Yale University Press. $4.

Problems of Social Well-Being. By *James H. S. Bossard.* Harpers. $3.50.

Man's Quest for Social Guidance. By *Howard W. Odum.* Holt.

The Attic Night of Aulus Gellius. Translated by *J. C. Rolfe.* Putnam. $2.50.

Exploration in Hittite Asia Minor. By *H. H. von der Osten.*

Travel

Travel books are not as numerous at this time of the year as in summer, but even at what might be termed an off season they continue to appear. Here before us is a group of volumes ranging in the localities they cover from the Far East to our own Hudson Valley, some of them narratives written with the leisureliness that attaches to the book intended for that vicarious journeying that is done through the medium of the written page, others frankly guidebooks, and still others a compromise between the two. Two of them, "New York Nights," by Stephen Graham (Doran: $4), and "Highlights of Manhattan," by Will Irwin (Century: $6), fall rather into the category of *Belles lettres* than of travel, for they are so flavored by personal experience in the one case, and so reflected from the journalist's angle in the other, as to derive their interest as much from the liveliness of their incidental comment as from the facts which they present. Mr. Graham confines his accounts to a chronicle of the night life of Manhattan as manifested in its various phases from its clubs like Texas Guinan's and luxurious hotels like the Ritz to the police courts and the Bowery. He writes with spirit and vivacity, as one who has been both participant and observer, and with the detachment of the foreigner to whom the life he is watching has something of the exotic about it. Mr. Irwin, on the other hand, depicts his New York, the New York of the working world, of the shopping and theatre districts, of Greenwich Village and Columbia University, with the practiced hand of the journalist who knows its every corner and whose eye is always keen for the picturesque and the contrasting. Both books alike are interesting and sprightly, and should prove of interest to the reader who, familiar with it, wants his own impressions confirmed and to him who, not knowing it, wishes to make the acquaintance of the city in its most striking aspects.

Of quite different type is Sarah Comstock's "Roads to the Revolution" (Macmillan: $5). Miss Comstock, to the accompaniment of numerous illustrations, describes briefly Boston and the environs which were the scenes of Revolutionary activity, and those portions of New York State and of Long Island, of Pennsylvania and Virginia in which military operations were conducted. She has woven into her narrative here an anecdote and there a description, now an allusion and again a bit of historical chronicle, with the result that her book has interest if not much significance. It should prove a pleasant commentary for those who are covering the routes she describes.

What Miss Comstock does for certain sections of America M. V. Hughes does for his own country in "About England" (Morrow: $2.50 net), a small volume, not particularly well written, which affords glimpses of urban and rural England, with sidelights on its customs, its history, its inns, its bridges, and some of its occupations. It is a somewhat attenuated and a very desultory book which though it contains considerable of interest is too indifferently written fully to realize its possibilities. Of much better calibre is J. H. Wade's "Rambles in Cathedral Cities" (Stokes), an account of such towns as Winchester, Salisbury, and Canterbury in which historical incident, description, literary allusion, and anecdote are deftly interwoven. There is a sound background of scholarship to Mr. Wade's volume which is enlivened by the resources of a well-stored mind. For motor tourists of England a good book has recently been published in Henry Parr Maskell's "The Taverns of Old England" (Day: $4), in which the old inns of the country are projected against a historical background. More strictly of the guide book class is the little volume by W. T Palmer, "Things Seen in North Wales" (Dutton: $1.50), of which a sister volume, "Things Seen in Rome," by Albert G. Mackinnon, was published shortly before it.

Intended entirely as a manual for the traveler and not at all as general reading for him is Harry L. Foster's "If You Go to South America" (Dodd, Mead: $3), a

(*Continued on next page*)

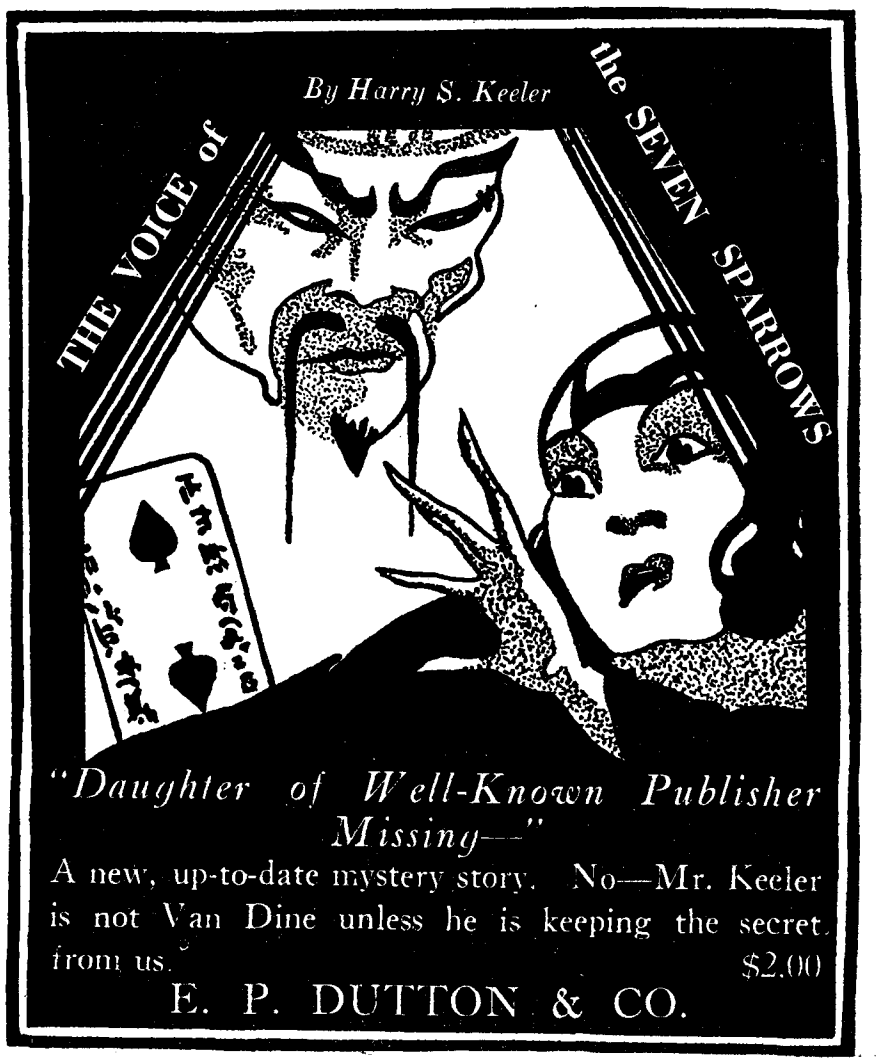
By the author of

MISS TIVERTON GOES OUT

November Night

Each of its two principal actors, the wife and the husband, is subtly and devilishly alive, and each is as interesting as the other. —*New York Times*

$2.50 all stores Bobbs-Merrill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A Special Service

By FREDERIC MELCHER

THE basic idea of bookshops for children is a special service from a bookseller who knows the literature available, knows the children, and knows how to bring the two together. When such a person has the instincts of a good merchant, he or she will gather a collection of books that will be the basis of the business, will put these in a setting of shelving, tables, and light such as are really suitable for the books shown, will prepare lists with which to give examples of the plan, and will give a service both in the shop and through the mail that leaves no doubt as to competence.

The important thing is to have the idea in the minds of the right people, and the shops will form themselves, each one different but each one having its own flavor that marks it as a true rendezvous for the boys and girls, and the parents of boys and girls. If one tried to outline the details of a model shop, I should immediately say there was no model.

When Bertha Mahony undertook to launch her Bookshop for Boys and Girls for the Women's Educational and Industrial Union of Boston, she had an extraordinarily clear idea of what she intended to do, a practical knack for detail, and a fine persistence in building up slowly toward her ideal. No one who wishes to study a children's bookshop will omit seeing this store on Boylston Street, Boston, which was at first located in a hard-to-find room on the second floor of one of the old houses which the Union owned, and now is in the mezzanine and balcony of a delightful first floor shop next door to the first location. This shop leaves the visitor no doubt as to the discrimination of the collection, the competence of the service, and the growth of the business testifies to the success of the selling program. From the start Miss Mahony had the assistance of librarians and teachers in the vicinity, who saw alike the vision that Miss Mahony had of her new style of enterprise.

This background of a women's organization is quite different from that under which Virginia Hutchinson developed her business in the fine big department store of Halle Brothers, Cleveland. The firm had erected a huge doll house some thirty feet square near the toys, and this was to be used for the sale of fine imported dolls. The war disturbed the doll importations, and they conceived the idea of converting the doll-shop into a bookshop. Miss Hutchinson was taken from the Public Library staff and proved to have just the right knack for bookshop building. The department grew happily in the neighborhood of the toys until the firm decided to have a complete bookshop and put Miss Hutchinson in charge.

The Korner & Wood bookstore in Cleveland came to specialize in children's books from a different angle, that of a high-grade bookstore with a select clientèle endeavoring to give to customers as competent a service as they did in any other. When they planned their new store, the attractive mezzanine was given to Clara Ford, and the visitor has a quick consciousness of a complete stock in a pleasant atmosphere.

A pioneer specialist in the New York area brings to mind still other characteristics of bookshop development. Miss Cutter was a trained librarian in the children's field and gave up that work to rent a little store on Thirty-first Street on the site from which the Sunwise Turn Book Shop had just moved. When that building was torn down, she went to a basement store on Forty-seventh Street and again created a happy and pleasing atmosphere of expert service. Again the building was torn down, and she moved across Park Avenue to her present location on East Fifty-seventh Street, the most fashionable shopping area in New York. The atmosphere of the shop is still further enriched by its joint occupation with a specialist in children's furniture. The two ideas go together admirably.

To this same corner has now come Harper's Bookshop for Boys and Girls, which, instead of clinging to the ground floor as Miss Cutter has done, has chosen the fifth floor of a banking building in a luxurious atmosphere of fine furniture and decoration. The Arden Galleries, which adjoin, have fitted the two suites of rooms with uniform care, and the three or four rooms which the Harper shop has are most beautiful examples of discreet and imaginative shop equipment. The shop has been put in charge of Mrs. Pauline Sutorius-Langley, who was at one time with Miss Mahony in Boston and lately in charge of the Drama Bookshop, and an extensive campaign of promotion and publicity backed by fine catalogues, etc., has been undertaken.

Of the three large bookstores in the middle Fifth Avenue area, each illustrates different methods of presenting children's books in its own good way—Brentano's, where a large area in the basement has been given a separate identity under Miss Salt's management; Putnam's, which likewise has a whole room with its own service and exhaustive stock; and Scribner's, which achieved a most likable effect by putting children's books underneath the balcony at the rear, extremely convenient to every visitor and yet with a sense of retirement so desirable.

Perhaps nothing gave greater cheer to those who look forward to better and better service for these shops than the coming into the field of Gertrude Andrus, an outstanding figure in children's library work in the Northwest, who was brought into bookselling by Frederick & Nelson, the quality department store of Seattle. Miss Andrus has a complete book department but naturally and instinctively emphasizes the service to children, and it may be certain that Seattle parents will not suffer for lack of real service.

Another Pacific city, Portland, brings its own special testimony, for here is the great institution of J. K. Gill Company, where Mrs. Mable Arundel Harris was given the responsibility of injecting personality into the balcony shop for boys and girls. This she did with such high success that the service became famous and was accepted almost as a state institution by librarians, teachers, and other people in the educational field. Mrs. Harris, recently leaving the department in good hands, has moved nearer to her own home and is launching the book department for the Rhodes Department Store of Seattle, where she has immediately caught the interest of the city by calling her place the "Old Ship Bookshop" and fitting it up in that atmosphere with great detail and imagination.

San Francisco, one of the best book cities in the country, a few years ago saw the entrance into this special field of the Children's Bookshop, planned by Jean Chambers Moore and Mrs. Powell, well known through the city, under whose nurture the shop became finally the "Post Street Bookshop." Children's books, however, were still given special attention, and the collection brought together with fine discrimination was displayed in a delightful little room just a few steps off the main selling floor. Paul Elder, too, in his colorful shop further down the street modeled his interesting quarters so that there would be a special atmosphere for children's books, convenient yet exclusive.

In Los Angeles there is a special store like none other we have described, for Mr. and Mrs. Markham Field Macklin have taken a little frame house in a new but rapidly developing district, and behind its drab exterior one is suddenly ushered into the colorfulness of modern jackets of picture books and fairy tales. Husband and wife have labored together to make this store known to all Los Angeles.

Something like the experiment of Halle Brothers is the development of the Denver Dry Goods Company, where Mrs. Lucy Miller, taking a most unpromising passageway on the third floor near the toys, with simple methods, produced an atmosphere thoroughly suitable to the display of books for children and has brought to it a satisfied and enthusiastic clientèle.

It is somewhat invidious to flit here and there mentioning individual shops when a score of others might be mentioned, but out of these may perhaps be gathered some pictures to illustrate the theme of this discussion, that the basic factor is the personality and that the development, given a reasonably free hand, will then take care of itself. Of the soundness of this movement toward special children's stores there can be no doubt, and the future depends on there being attracted to the field more and more people who have enthusiasm for the work and the knack of practical organization.

What Is It?

I KNOW A SECRET. By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co. 1927.

Reviewed by BURGES JOHNSON
Syracuse University

IT is common knowledge that Christopher Morley has some abnormal power of acquainting himself with the thoughts and fancies of a dog. Perhaps there is spiritual sympathy so strong that it amounts to intercommunication. Perhaps there are psychic currents, or what have you. I never did learn all that terminology. Or perhaps when he and a dog are alone together the dog barks and Christopher barks back. It may be as simple as that. At any rate he has written another book with a dog in it; but this time there are also a cat and some kittens, a French snail, pigeons, a rabbit or two, and the children that belong to them.

It is a confusing book, to a precise professor like myself. I cannot be sure, even when I have finished it, whether the house and backyard where most of the action occurs belong to a certain Mr. Mistletoe who is a writer, or to Fourchette who is a self-possessed mother-cat. I cannot be quite sure that Mr. Liverwurst who operates the useful delicatessen shop in the village is entirely human even though he is entirely pleasing. He leaves his shop in charge of Donny the dog while he goes on a picnic with the cat family and the snail and the rabbits, and drives the kittens nearly wild because his clothes smell so of sausage. I cannot even be sure (and this is torture to a reviewer) whether the book should be classified as realistic or romantic. Undoubtedly the detailed doings of the several characters are recorded meticulously; on the other hand I have spent much time in and about Sea Cliff and Rosslyn and Hempstead Harbor, and I never yet saw a dog driving a Ford car with live cats and rabbits for passengers, or any such creatures out sailing, or telling each other a succession of amusing short stories. Nor do I believe that even French snails talk. On the whole I should classify the book as both confusing and unreal, were it not for a chance experience.

There is in my own home a thirteen-year-old daughter, a west-highland terrier, and a young rabbit which is sometimes permitted the run of the parlor. I had occasion yesterday to read opening chapters of Mr. Morley's book aloud to my wife, in order to gain her confirming disapproval of its absurdities. To my surprise I found that my daughter had paused in her affairs in order to listen, and that the dog and rabbit had both drawn near and assumed attitudes of entranced attention. "Can't you see," I said, "that it all makes very little sense, except perhaps in some of the quaint tales, and that it is impossible to figure out where anyone lives, or with whom?"

"It is all perfectly clear and sensible," my daughter interrupted, "and quite interesting and educational. The things anybody can't understand in it nobody needs to know."

To my great astonishment the dog at once chimed in. "She is quite right," he said. "The book is one every child and animal should read. I call it a good example of modern realism. Fourchette is a typical cat with her superior airs and thinking she knows it all."

"Yes, it's a good book," remarked the rabbit. "I am sure its pages would have a delicate flavor. May I borrow it when you are through?" he added politely.

The New Books

Travel

(*Continued from preceding page*)

handbook which maps out routes, records hotels, and presents skeleton information concerning towns and points of interest. A reference book on South America that should prove of much value in editorial offices, business offices, and all institutions where statistical information is required is "The South American Handbook" edited by J. A. Hunter (South American Publica-

(*Continued on next page*)

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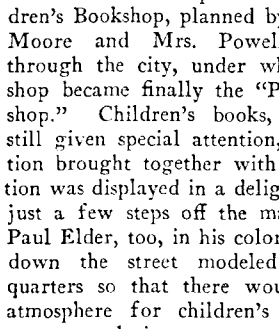

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The Wits' Weekly

Conducted by EDWARD DAVISON

Competition No. 17. A prize of fifteen dollars is offered for the best "Thoughts on Reading of the Death of Thomas Hardy," in not less than 400 words of prose. (Entries should reach the *Saturday Review* office, 25 West 45th Street, New York City, not later than the morning of February 13.)

Competition No. 18. A prize of fifteen dollars is offered for the best short lyric called "Going Down Hill in an Automobile." (Entries should reach the *Saturday Review* office not later than the morning of February 20.)

Competitors are advised to read carefully the rules printed below.

THE FOURTEENTH COMPETITION

A prize of fifteen dollars was offered for the best "Ballade of American Periodicals," with the refrain "He (we or I) read(s) *The Saturday Review.*"

WON BY GEORGE MEASON
(New York City)

THE PRIZE BALLADE

WITH what bright hues the book-stall glows!
What vermeil maids with lapis eyes!
Soul Throbs, True Thrills: *what boob but knows*
What scarlet wares they advertise?
I gaze at them with wild surmise.
Confessions?—Well they may be true;
But I'll be safe and not so wise:
I read The Saturday Review.

The Yard and Woodshed—pas grande chose!
Hermes—a yellow pack of lies!
The Sentinel red and redder grows
In inverse ratio to its size.
O Muses, hear my longing cries;
Give me the scissors and the glue!
I'll teach them not to splash the dyes!
I read The Saturday Review.

And yet much more than you'd suppose,
The high-brow press for "color" tries.
Whenas in orange Scribners *goes*
And Harper's *with the rainbow vies,*
It would not cause me much surprise,
If the Atlantic *bloomed Yale-blue!*
Well, let them mock the sunset skies:
I read The Saturday Review.

Envoy

Kit Morley's dope, it's just my size!
Benét and Davison: a vous!
I'm dippy on Herr Canby's guys:
I read The Saturday Review.
GEORGE MEASON.

Was it carelessness or ignorance that caused so many people to read Ballade without the final E? One way or the other there were some twenty entries in English ballad form and all had to be disqualified. It went to my heart to throw away Tom Henry's entry beginning—

Maud Muller flicked her ash away
And eyed her polished nails anew.
"My love must be a man of taste;
I've gold enough and looks for two.
Not what they have, but what they read
Will tell me what they think and are."
And so she filled the shaker, fixed
The Ice, and left the door ajar.

But this was neither ballade nor ballad. Among Tom Henry's nonconforming companions was one who took the set refrain at its face value with surprising results.

There's Mr. Mencken's Mercury
alive with witty capers.
Statistics prove this man has made at least a million apers.
One culls a snappy paragraph on everything taboo
And He (I, or we) read(s) The Saturday Review.

R. G. Dayton's refrain will delight Mr. Cathcart.

For we read, we read, we read,
Whate'er in life we do—
I read, you read, he reads, they read
The Saturday Review!

Personally I had hoped for at least a dash of salutary criticism of ourselves. But competitors reserved that for other periodicals. Bellerophon Jones, Deborah C. Jones, and several others kicked out.

Pulps that are crammed with poison and pull—
The Evening News *and* The Daily Graph—
Ic—*make me kick like an army mule:*
McFadden's Ale I cannot quaff.
Deliver me from the photograph
Depicting the truths that don't look true. . . .
These public panderers, Gott Strafe!
I read The Saturday Review.

That was Bellerophon. Deborah began really well.

The Nation's *heresy schism,*
The Dial's *schism and heresy,*
Scribner's "*A bas anachronism—*
Our cover's new and so are we—"
The sunny bright philosophy
That the Priscilla's kind puts through,
Suffice not my necessity:
I read The Saturday Review.

A. Reader paid some nice compliments to Mr. Morley and Mr. Benét. But I must make an end by quoting the best ballade of the week which would have taken the prize from Mr. Meason but for its disregard of all periodicals except ours and *Contemporary Verse.* Mr. Musser (who, as you may know, is the editor of the last named publication) does not really write a Ballade of American Periodicals. But he has caught the spirit of the ballade form better than any of his rivals; besides, look at his envoy.

Ninety-nine one-fourth percent
Pure, American, Nordic, white,
I have never up and went
Fer litterchoor to lands benight.
Settin' pretty, settin' tight,
Crammin' culture an hour 'r two
When there ain't no boxin' fight
I read The Saturday Review.

Bein' a literary gent,
I got a epicure's appetite
Fer magazines what represent
Polish, breedin', sweetness and light.
Kit Morley is a waggish wight,
And Bill Rose B. pinned me askew
Fer a book I wrote . . . To be polite,
I read The Saturday Review.

My time is otherwise misspent
Editin' things them poets recite
(Contemporary Verse *is meant*);
But I don't read the stuff they write—
Just chuck it in, to their delight;
And when, unread, the job is through,
Most every rainy Friday night
I read The Saturday Review.

ENVOY

Your journal ain't so blindin' bright;
But, Mister Davison, being' it's you,
Somebody's gotta treat you right,—
I read The Saturday Review.

BENJAMIN MUSSER.

RULES

(Competitors failing to comply with rules will be disqualified.)

1. Envelopes should be addressed to "The Competitions Editor, *The Saturday Review of Literature,* 25 West 45th Street, New York City." The number of the competition (e.g., "Competition 1") must be written on the top left-hand corner. 2. All MSS. must be legible—typewritten if possible—and should bear the name or pseudonym of the author. Competitors may offer more than one entry. MSS. cannot be returned. 3. *The Saturday Review* reserves the right to print the whole or part of any entry.

The New Books

Travel

(*Continued from preceding page*)

tions), the fifth annual volume of which this issue is.

For those who in their travels would wander further afield, Crosbie Garstin's "The Dragon and the Lotus" (Stokes: $2.50), an informational travel book on the East, half journal, half description, and Helen Churchill Candee's "New Journeys in Old Asia" (Stokes: $4), vignettes of Indo-China, Siam, Java, and Bali, with etchings to complete their effect, are interesting books.

VANISHED CITIES OF NORTHERN FRANCE. By *Mrs. Stewart Erskine* and *Major Benton Fletcher.* Houghton Mifflin. $6.

THE LAND OF THE RHONE. By *Hugh Quigley.* Houghton Mifflin. $5.

MOROCCO FROM A MOTOR. By *Paul E. Vernon.* Macmillan.

WANDERINGS IN ANGLO-SAXON BRITAIN. By *Arthur Weigall.* Doran. $3 net.

NEW YORK NIGHTS. By *Stephen Graham.* Doran. $4.

THE VOYAGING OF THE CAROLINA TO VAN DIEMAN'S LAND AND BATAVIA IN 1827-1808. By ***Rosalie Hare.*** Longmans, Green.

Pamphlets

WHILE CLANKING THE CHAINS. Poems. By Alexander Zimmerman.

IN PERSPECTIVE. By *Grover Clark.* Peking, China: *Peking Leader.* 60 cents.

THE WILL TO LOVE. By *George Bedborough.* Unicorn Press.

SHAKESPEARE AND THE STOICISM OF SENECA. By *T. S. Eliot.* Oxford University Press. 70 cents.

Philosophy

PSYCHOLOGY IN DAILY LIFE. By ***Carl Emil*** *Seashore.* Appleton. $1.

CHRISTIANITY AND NATIONALITY. By ***Ernest*** *Barker.* Oxford. 70 cents.

GOD AND THE GOLDEN RULE. By *Joseph* ***Fort*** *Newton.* Century. $2.

CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIAL ADVENTURING. Edited by *Jerome Davis.* Century. $2.50.

ROMANCE OF THE SUN. By *Mary Proctor.* Harpers. $2.50.

A WORKING SYSTEM OF COLOR. By *Frederick Leroy Sargent.* Holt. $5.

THE INVERT. By *Anomaly.* London: Ballière, Tindall & Cox.

THE EVOLUTION OF SCIENTIFIC THOUGHT. By *A. d'Abro.* Boni & Liveright. $5.

THE UNCONSCIOUS. Edited by *Mrs. W. F. Dummer.* Knopf. $2.50.

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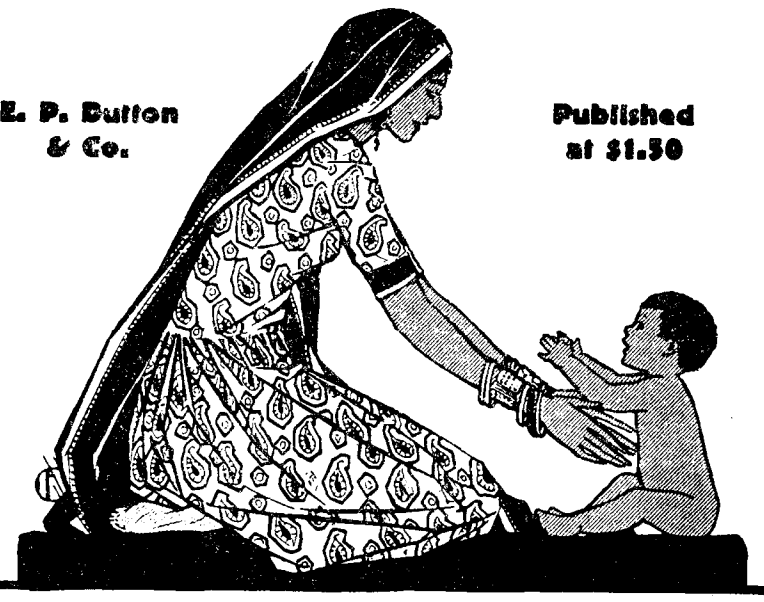

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Points of View

Imported Books

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

Notwithstanding the great increase in pleasurable occupations that has come about in the last dozen years or so, pastimes which were previously unknown or enjoyed only by the very few, reading still holds its place as the one resource always to be depended upon for the great majority of our people.

As evidence of this truth, it is only necessary to point out the enormous increase in number and circulation of our popular magazines, notwithstanding which the best sellers among the books of the moment still hold a foremost place.

It seems rather a pity that the publishers and the booksellers, aided by the reviewers, should have fostered this craze for the reading of the best seller, valueless and inappropriate as many of the books of that class are for the information, interest, or even pleasure of hosts of their readers. . . .

Imported books of this class, many of them of great importance (I may mention, as examples, Professor Whitehead's well known works on the "Principles of Natural Knowledge" and the "Principle of Relativity with Applications to Physical Science") are as necessary to the student, the professor, and the directors of our educational institutions as are the tools of his trade to the carpenter, the mason, or the electrical worker, notwithstanding which the circulation of such books in recent years has not kept pace, largely owing to their cost, with the growth of our public interest in the development of science and education.

Many of these books which are so necessary as the tools of his trade to the special student and educational worker are the productions of foreign scholars attached to the great universities of Great Britain and other countries, and such books, owing to their small circulation and their appeal only to students and scholars are seldom printed in this country and are usually imported in small quantities for those to whom their use is necessary.

Students and others who need such books in their work are seldom gifted with this world's goods in abundance and are often in receipt of most moderate salaries as compared with modern standards. It accordingly follows that the price at which such books are sold is a most vital matter from the standpoint of those who use them.

In the year 1903, an attempt having been made by the Custom House appraisers to increase greatly the dutiable value of books imported from abroad, which would have resulted in considerable increases in their prices to students, the importers of such books in New York appeared before the Board of General Appraisers in an effort to have such books declared dutiable at the then prevailing rate of 25 per cent on the cost of the books to the importers rather than on the advanced and fictitious cost advocated by some of the appraisers before whom these books were entered for assessment. After a long controversy, which was carried on partly in the newspapers and partly with the Custom House officials, the case was referred for final action to the Board of General Appraisers, who, after hearing fairly all the evidence, decided that books should be admitted into this country at the cost to the importer for the purposes of the assessment of duty; and the practice of so admitting these books at the cost to the importer plus the then existing duty of 25 per cent prevailed from 1903 for a period of nearly fifteen years, with the result that books necessary to the student and the scholar were not advanced in price, as would otherwise have been necessary, and were sold at a much lower price than is possible today.

In the year 1913 a new Tariff Bill was enacted in which Congress, evidently with the laudable intention in mind of reducing the cost of such books to students and others, lowered the duty on them from 25 per cent to 15 per cent. That it was the intention of Congress to reduce the duty on these classes of books mostly or solely is evidenced by the fact that in the new bill many other classes of books which are competitive from the American publishers' and printers' point of view were raised from the normal rate in various ways.

Apparently the action of Congress in reducing the duty met with objection on the part of the Treasury, and in 1918-19, through its Board of Appraisers and Customs Courts, the question of the value of the imported books on which the new duty of 15 per cent should be assessed was again raised, and, notwithstanding the arguments of the publishers—arguments which convinced the Board of General Appraisers in the years 1902-03—the Customs Court declared that the duty should be assessed not upon the cost of the books but upon a fictitious price, which in many or most cases was double and in some cases more than double the actual cost of the books to the importers, the effect being that the books in question now paid a greater amount of duty under the reduced rate as authorized by Congress than was previously paid on such books at the higher rate of 25 per cent and the prices of these books to students and others were of necessity greatly increased.

There seems no reasonable excuse for this successful attempt on the part of the Treasury, through its Customs Court, to nullify the deliberate intentions of Congress, and the students and others who use books to which this new ruling applies apparently rejoiced too soon at the attempt of Congress to reduce their burdens. As has been pointed out above, books imported from abroad now cost these consumers more in relation to their foreign price than was the case before the duty was nominally reduced by Congress from 25 per cent to 15 per cent.

Even although under a strictly narrow legal interpretation of the wording of the Tariff Act, backed by a report from a custom's agent which was biased, incomplete, and inaccurate, there is perhaps warrant for the ruling which was put into effect, it seems without doubt that common sense should govern the matter, as was the case in 1903, rather than a merely technical, narrow, legal ruling on the actual words used, the evident intention of Congress having been to reduce the duty, whereas the ruling of the Customs Court above referred to actually increases it, and the benevolent intention of Congress has been frustrated by the bureaucratic methods of the Treasury.

When this somewhat high-handed ruling was made there seemed little doubt that it was a war measure, and I accordingly, while appearing by attorneys at the hearing before the Customs Court, made little serious effort to influence or combat the Customs Court's decision, especially as the increased duty, as is always the case, could be handed over to our customers by the simple process of raising the prices.

It is time, however, that we went back to the saner view of this matter that prevailed for fifteen years, between the years 1903 and 1918, especially as the increased duty received by the Treasury was not large, the sums involved being tens of thousands rather than millions of dollars, and no appreciable increase of revenue resulted.

The fact that these imported books, as I have already said, fail to sell as well as formerly, largely on account of their increased prices, undoubtedly points to the fact that students and others are doing without, as best they can, books which are necessary to them in their daily work, and a relief from this condition is certainly greatly to be desired.

GEORGE P. BRETT.

New York.
The Macmillan Co.

Still More Beecher

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

I have been very much interested in the peculiar psychology of the defenders of the late Henry Ward Beecher particularly as revealed by Mr. Samuel Scoville's two letters about Paxton Hibben's "Henry Ward Beecher: An American Portrait." The curious thing about these people is that none of them seems to have read Mr. Hibben's book, and certainly Mr. Scoville cannot have read Mr. Hibben's letter to which he replies at such length in your issue of January 7th.

In the matter, for example, of Mr. Scoville's assertion that Henry Ward Beecher was not the editor of *The Christian Union* (now *The Outlook*) in January, 1870. Mr. Hibben countered with a quite overwhelming array of documentary evidence to prove that he was. Is Mr. Scoville convinced? Not in the least. He comes back with the charge that "it is quite typical of Mr. Hibben's method" that "he takes part of a statement and omits the rest" in quoting Mr. Scoville. But Mr. Hibben proved conclusively precisely the specific point which Mr. Scoville had questioned, and all Mr. Scoville has to say in reply is: "My authority is the unrebutted evidence of *The Outlook* which accused Mr. Hibben of perverting the truth by his statement."

Now on this point, I happen to know something myself, for when the editorial in *The Outlook* first appeared, I wrote Mr. Ernest Hamlin Abbott, Henry Ward Beecher's successor as editor of *The Outlook*, and pointed out to him that there is no end of incontrovertible evidence that Mr. Beecher was the editor of *The Christian Union* from its very first issue and was even widely advertised as its editor before an issue had appeared. Did Mr. Abbott thereupon correct in *The Outlook* the charge of misrepresentation he had brought against Mr. Hibben? Not he. On the contrary, he replied to my letter that "if Mr. Beecher was editor" of *The Christian Union* in January, 1870, "he was not publicly acknowledged as such in the paper itself." But Mr. Abbott had accused Mr. Hibben of misrepresentation on the ground that Mr. Beecher was *not* the editor at that time!

In this same letter, Mr. Abbott advised me that if I should "wish to get a thorough exposition of Mr. Hibben's book" I should read a letter by Mr. Edwin D. Meade, in the Boston *Transcript*. So I did read it, and found that Mr. Meade, the author of Mr. Abbott's idea of a "thorough exposition of Mr. Hibben's book," admitted in his letter that he had not read Mr. Hibben's book!

Under these circumstances it is hardly astonishing to find Mr. Scoville assuming that "Mr. Beecher's purity and integrity" had in some miraculous way been established by resolutions presented to a mixed public gathering, or asserting that Mr. Hibben had, for some sinister motive, concealed the fact that Judge Neilson was present when this epochal event took place—though the fact is duly recorded on page 341 of Mr. Hibben's book. Facts seem to have little weight with people of the peculiar intellectual equipment of Mr. Beecher's followers. Mr. Scoville waxes highly indignant because, he says, Mr. Hibben presents his grandfather in the light of having received a little railroad stock in return for some excellent publicity for the railroad in the columns of Mr. Beecher's paper. He doen not, however, deny the publicity.

Some strange people do go to making up a world!

JEAN CRAIK READ.

Montgomery, Ala.

Mrs. Tighe's "Psyche"

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

Referring to the recent communication by Mr. W. A. Slade, Chief Bibliographer of the Library of Congress, in regard to Mrs. Tighe's "Psyche," I would like to inform your readers that Dr. E. V. Weller, whose important paper on Keats and Mary Tighe (Publications of the Modern Language Association, December, 1927) has reawakened interest in the works of this Irish poetess, is reediting the complete text of Mrs. Tighe's poems from the edition of 1811 with notes pointing out parallel phrases in the poetry of Keats. It will contain also a complete bibliography of Mrs. Tighe's poems.

This volume, which has already been sent to press, will be issued in the Revolving Fund Series of the Modern Language Association.

New York. CARLETON BROWN.

Stuart P. Sherman

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

We are preparing a biographical study of the late Stuart Sherman, in which we hope to include many of his letters. We shall be grateful to any of his friends who are willing to send us letters from him, and will return the originals as soon as copies can be made. Letters may be addressed to either of the undersigned.

JACOB ZEITLIN.
706 W. Nevada St.,
Urbana, Illinois.

HOMER E. WOODBRIDGE,
178 Cross St.,
Middletown, Conn.

Old and New Style

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

The comment in your last number anent the birthday of George Washington being celebrated (while he was alive) on February 12th, adds a naïve trifle to the mass of ignorance afloat regarding the change of Style from Old to New in 1752. He was born on the 22d of February (the 11th month) 1732 (the year then beginning on the 25th of March) and though ten days were "stricken from the calendar" in 1752 they were not stricken from his life. He was, therefore, just a year older on each 12*th* of February.

Since his death and the change of Style being forgotten, we logically celebrate the 22d because he was born on the 22d. This year it will be 175 years and 12 days since his birth, owing to the increasing difference between the Julian and the Gregorian systems of calendar.

JOHN COX, JR.

Alas, Poor Yorick

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

In *The Saturday Review* of December 31st, Mr. John Nicholas Biffels speaks quite feelingly of the sorrows of the small boys who wore Lord Fauntleroy suits and curls. Still I know a number of men, who as small boys, were very proud of their suits and curls. I remember very well indeed the delight my youngest brother had in his, and at seven years when it was decided the curls must go—he put his hands up to his head and cried "Oh please don't cut off my pretty curls," but the curls fell in shining heaps. A few days later he came running to the house and crying, said "Oh Mother, even the hens are laughing at me—saying "Cut, cut, got your hair cut!" As children we read and reread the story, during the long cold winter months, and I'm sure the older members of the family were exceedingly grateful to the author not once, but many times.

MARION KEITH KENNEDY.

Washington, D. C.

Roger Casement

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

Other than the fact that he writes himself down as a snob and a man whose small soul is a sneer, I do not know who or what Edmund Lester Pearson may be. But when you permit him to use your pages to refer to the late Roger Casement as a "traitor," it is time for one constant reader, who has been with you from the beginning, to tell you that while you produce a first-class literary weekly, you are permitting entirely too much political bias to creep in; this is not the first instance.

Here is a brief bit of historical summary, with one space left blank:

——— ——— was a man of non-English nationality, whose country was, at the time of his birth, and until he had reached middle age, politically dependent on Great Britain. He served the British Government with credit and distinction. But the time came when the wrongs and oppressions practised against his native land by the British Government, compelled him and other leaders of his people to refuse further allegiance to that Government, and to join in declaring the independnce of his native land. He entered into relations with another Government which was at enmity with Britain, and he furthered military operations against the British Government.

Now, is not that statement equally true and exact whether you put in the blank space the name of George Washington, or that of Benjamin Franklin, or that of Roger Casement? Is there any difference in the quality of the acts committed by those three men against the British Government? Is there any essential difference except that Casement was caught and hanged, thus furnishing material for one of those Historic British Trials which you let Mr. Pearson, to his evident gloating delight, tell about in a review fully three times as long as your usual article about an important book; while Washington and Franklin were not caught and not hanged, thereby depriving Mr. Edmund Lester Pearson of the opportunity which he would plainly enjoy, to sneer at them as "traitors"? I hope I may never have to meet Mr. Edmund Lester Pearson, but I shall never forget that I had the honor to meet Roger Casement.

SHAEMAS O'SHEEL.

Bunner Letters

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

May I take this means of informing students of American literature and other friends or acquaintances of the late H. C. Bunner, that with the consent of the family I am engaged in collecting the material for a biography which may grow into "The Life and Letters of Henry Cuyler Bunner"? At present I am collecting the letters, and I will appreciate the opportunity to make copies of any now in the possession of individuals or libraries. Bound volumes of *Puck* for the years 1877, 1878, 1891, 1892, 1893, 1894, and 1895 are not available in New London; possibly I can borrow (one at a time) such volumes as I may need?

GERARD E. JENSEN.

Connecticut College,
New London, Conn.

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The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the selection of books and questions of like nature should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review*.

A. P., Ithaca, N. Y., resolves my doubt concerning the pronunciation of Sze. "Having met him—he lived next door for the better part of a summer—I would advise you that the good man is known as Z (with a little lingual afterthought). This pronunciation is confirmed by Upton Close, who lectured here recently on Russian and Chinese affairs. He referred to the gentleman with a happy, though indefinable, mean between Zeh and Zuh. I leave you to figure it out!"

E. B. T., McGill University, Montreal, Canada, asks "Can you tell me something of the 'Tennessee poets'? I came across 'Grace Before Meat,' by John Crowe Ransom some time ago, and hear he and others have written more since. I can find nothing of them from booksellers here."

IN a beautifully printed little book with a phoenix upon the jacket and another in mauve upon the title-page, the eleven poets who for four years issued most of their verse in a journal of poetry called *The Fugitive*, published in Nashville, Tennessee, find themselves assembled under the title "Fugitives" (Harcourt, Brace). Originally they were seven, Donald Davidson, whose "The Tall Men," lately published by Houghton Mifflin, is one of the verse-volumes not to be this year passed by; James Marshall Frank, Sidney Mittron-Hirsch, John Crowe Ransom, the best known of the group, represented in contemporary poetry by "Poems About God" (Holt), "Chills and Fever" (Knopf), and "Two Gentlemen in Bonds" (Knopf), Alec B. Stevenson, and Allen Tate. Others joined the movement later, including Laura Riding, whose "The Close Chaplet" has been published by the Adelphi Company. The history of the journal *The Fugitive* is told in the foreword to this book, and in this are named some of the magazines in which poems by these writers have appeared, beginning with *The Double Dealer*. One finds here "The Lover, the most ingratiating of Mr. Ransom's poems—which for the most part scorn to be ingratiating at all, and "Bells for John Whiteside's Daughter," the poem that first made me his admirer. Here is the cerebral music of Laura Riding's "Afternoon," and the extraordinary evocation known as "Fire on Belmont Street," by Davidson, which I here discover won the prize of the Poetry Society of South Carolina for 1926. Altogether it is a find, this book; it gleams with cold fire.

E. A. A., Charleston, W. Va., asks for books for a student of journalism and for one who plans to study general advertising; books such as are used in trade schools or colleges.

THERE is a new, revised edition just from Appleton of the standard work, "Effective Direct Advertising," by R. E. Ramsay, a comprehensive text. "Advertising Procedure," by Otto Kleppner (Prentice-Hall), and "Advertising Handbook," by Samuel R. Hall (McGraw-Hill) are solid and reliable books covering all departments of the subject; "Principles of Advertising" (Ronald), by Harry Tipper and others, deals with economics, market analysis, planning and carrying out campaigns, preparing copy, and designing display. These are all large volumes costing around five dollars, for reference or study purposes. Daniel Starch's "Principles of Advertising" (Shaw) is a college text-book treating the subject theoretically as well as practically, using the scientific point of view and applying scientific methods.

Two new books are announced by the John Day Company whose descriptions sound to me as though they belonged on this list: Howard W. Dickinson's "Primer of Promotion," a small book of first principles, by one who has used them with success, and Carl Percy's thorough treatment of the subject of "Window Display Advertising," with many illustrations.

The "Handbook for Newspaper Workers," by Grant M. Hyde (Appleton), is a valuable and widely used desk-book for every kind of copy preparation. "Essentials in Journalism," by Harrington and Frankenberg (Ginn), is a text-book that includes editorial writing, book-reviewing, and dramatic criticism. A spirited and intensely practical guide to every-day affairs is "Editing the Day's News," by George C. Bastian (Macmillan) of the Chicago *Tribune*, and the boy with an ambition to get on a newspaper may see what it is like through "Getting the News," by William S. Maulsby (Harcourt, Brace), a reporter's first-aid. There is a new edition of the popular text-book by L. N. Flint, "The Editorial" (Appleton): this has been completely revised.

"Writing and Editing for Women," by Ethel Colson Brazelton (Funk & Wagnalls), may not interest this inquirer, but I suggest it to girls whose ideas turn this way—and to clubwomen writing papers on opportunities for women, for it has a good deal to say on this subject. "Free Lancing for Forty Magazines," by Edward Mott Woolley (Writer Pub. Co.), is the straight story of a determined writer; others who are determined to write will find many experiences set down for their help.

G. C., Brooklyn, N. Y., is writing a paper on "Daring Women" and asks for material for documentation.

ONE could, I suppose, turn over the responsibility for this paper to Cameron Rogers, and dodge looking for the women by just reviewing his recent book, "Gallant Ladies" (Harcourt, Brace), for surely the ten whose lives he gives us were adventurous enough. Two pirates, two female desperadoes, Lola Montez, Mata Hari, Mlle. de Maupin, and Jeanne de la Motte, Adrienne Lecouvreur, the Duchess of Kingston—high or low, they took their lives in their hands, from which in more than one instance there were taken by the hand of justice. "Gallant Ladies" is a fascinating book, more glamorous even than Duncan Aikman's "Calamity Jane and the Lady Wildcats" (Holt), though several of this company appear also in the Rogers Group. This may be because the tintypes with which Mr. Aikman illustrates his book put too great a strain on any heroine—especially when her features, none too cozy at the best, are surmounted by an iron-bound sailor-hat riding high.

But regretfully as one turns from these relics of the early feminists, I must indeed do so, for from the accompanying letter I infer that the daring desired is along geographical rather than sociological lines. Rosita Forbes, for instance, qualifies with her "The Secret of the Sahara: Kufara" (Doran), and Lady Richmond Brown, whose "Unknown Tribes, Uncharted Seas" (Appleton) tells of adventures in Jamaica, in Panama, in the jungle, and among the wildest kinds of Indians, on San Blas Island. Mme. Alexandra David-Neel qualifies with "My Journey to Lhassa" (Harper), and a young Englishwoman, W. Lavallin Puxley, with "Wanderings in the Queensland Bush" (Houghton Mifflin), a naturalist's penetration to "the dead heart of Australia." In "A White Woman Among the Masai" (Dutton), Marguerite Mallet told of hunting lions and leopards in Africa, the climax coming when the Masai destroyed all her possessions and she had to fly for her life. Lady Warren described her journey "Through Algeria and Tunisia on a Motor Bicycle" (Houghton Mifflin). Mary Hastings Bradley has hunted gorillas through more than one book, and now the golden-haired daughter appearing in these records has a book to herself, and a vivacious one, in "Alice in Jungleland" (Appleton). Lilian Overell, in "A Woman's Experiences in German New Guinea" (Dodd, Mead), described her escape into the interior when war broke out and her life for several years among the untamed aborigines: this book was admired by no less an authority than Captain Moncton. In "The White Heart of Mojave" (Fisher, Unwin), Edna Brush Perkins describes the adventure of two women in Death Valley. Marguerite Harrison's "Marooned in Moscow" (Doran) tells her experiences in Bolshevik prisons.

A new item has just been added to this collection: in "Dragon Lizards of Komodo," by W. Douglass Burden (Putnam), the young wife of the author takes an important part in this unique "expedition to a lost world of the Dutch East Indies." This naturalist, having heard a rumor that true dragons were still living upon a remote island just behind the beyong, said to his wife "There is plenty of time to be careful and to play safe when we're a doddering old couple, tottering on the edge of the grave. Let's go!" So they went, passing through various Chinese and Javenese thrills, and there were the dragons all alive—oh, and back to this very city of ours some of them came, still alive, though I understand that the life here was too much for them in time. The pictures are marvelous; fancy a sort of degenerate dinosaur taken in the act of swallowing the entire hindquarters of a deer at one gulp. The stuffed specimens may be seen in the Komodo lizard group at the American Museum of Natural History, but in this book even without the pictures the sense of coming suddenly upon something left over from the Carboniferous Era is so strong as to be disturbing. Mrs. Martin Johnson takes part in the adventures set down and beautifully illustrated in Martin Johnson's "Safari: a Saga of the African Blue" (Putnam). This list might be greatly extended by applying for information to the Society of Women Explorers, New York, an organization whose records quite take one's breath away.

E. F. S., San Francisco, Cal., asks if a biography of James Stephens is available, but I cannot find a record that any has ever been made. Nor can I find, in response to another inquiry whether the essays published by Benn in the same inexpensive form as the Augustan Poets have appeared in this country, any evidence that they are expected to appear here: at any rate not through Stokes, who brought out the English pamphlet poets. And will someone tell *S. G., New York City*, in which of Kipling's books, and in what connection, money is defined as "the stuff that goes from hand to hand and never grows any warmer"? This information is needed as soon as may be.

"Adam's Breed," Miss Radclyffe Hall's novel of the Italian waiter who went in quest of his soul, has again won a coveted literary honor. News comes from London that this story which was awarded last year's Femina Prize as the best English novel of the year, has been chosen for the James Tait Black Prize of 250 sterling for the best novel of the year. The prize is a memorial to James Tait Black, the Scottish publisher, who did much to promote the best in literature. The terms of the trust provide that the adjudication is to be made by the Professor of English Literature in Edinburgh University. Professor Grierson, who has the chair of English Literature at the Famous Scottish university, is the judge who made the award.

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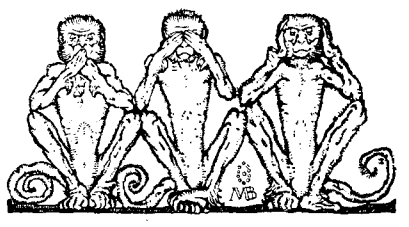

SHOP TALK

It was a cold winters evening. We were all sitting around an open radiator discussing the ever increasing tendency to sell more non-fiction than fiction. Things went along reasonably enough, in spite of the radiator's competition, until we ran into these new histories. It was apparent that we didn't know enough about the subject to carry on even a semi-intelligent conversation. We wondered if Mr. Rupert Hughes would be interested in writing a piece for this column. Lo! and behold! He is and here it is.

"If it is possible to speak generally of the vast jumble and infinite variety of outpourings called 'history,' it may be permissible to note one general 'trend' that might be called 'new,' without too great violence.

"It is the scientific spirit that has so largely revolutionized the mental and physical aspects of the world. A century or more ago the human mind began to seek freedom in all directions. The investigator learned to desire and to demand permission to observe without any other purpose than observation; to record with no other purpose than accuracy; and to deduce with pure logic and no fear, favor, or predilection.

"Science has more or less completely thrown off preconceptions, prejudices, radical and religious ambitions and terrorisms. The scientist is not seeking with microscope, telescope, spectroscope or any other device to prove the existence of anything except what is actually there. He does not keep one eye on nature and one eye on the angry preacher or the Holy Bible or the Inquisition. His Holy Bible is facts, conditions, and processes.

"In consequence, the world has gone forward with inconceivable leaps and bounds in the fields of material knowledge and invention. In a hundred years vastly more has been done for human health, prosperity, comfort and freedom than in all the countless centuries before.

"The new historian is trying to be a scientist. He searches the records as the geologist searches the strata and the paleontologist the asphalt beds. He describes what he finds. Impartiality is his passion. He has no religion, no patriotism, no party, no theory to glorify or to protect from the truth. His religion is the truth. His theory is the offshoot of the facts as he uncovers them.

"The result of truth-seeking for its own sake is as beneficial in history as in science. It is building an increasingly authentic picture of the past and it is offering to mankind an increasingly impregnable foundation for its attitude toward the present and the future.

"It is toppling many idols, changing many devils to decent people, revealing the clay feet of many gilded statues. But it is restoring humanity to humanity, and turning the human soul toward the true truth as its highest ideal. It is giving 'honesty' a new definition of almost mathematical impersonality and integrity."

We wish to thank Mr. Hughes for his aid in clarifying the situation for us. It would be well indeed if our many contemporaries who learned the fairy tales that were once labeled "history" would turn to the new scientific historians. They can be found in all A. B. A. bookstores, as can many of the older books. The booksellers are quite capable and can recommend those in which you will find the greatest interest.

Ellis Ames Ballard

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

American Booksellers Association

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An Inside Story of Publishing

NEARLY thirty years ago Somerset Maugham wrote a novel which then seemed extremely daring. It was refused by publisher after publisher, among others William Heinemann, whose windmill imprint is familiar to readers all over the world.

A PARTNER in Hodder and Stoughton, though unwilling for his own firm to publish the book, thought so well of it that he urged Mr. Heinemann to reconsider his decision.

MR. HEINEMANN re-read the book and agreed to publish it if the author would remove certain passages that might be thought improper. This was done and the book appeared.

NOW a new edition has just been published . . . printed from the original manuscript, with those parts left in that were once thought so offensive. Except for some minor corrections by the author, this is the selfsame book that so upset London's most famous editors.

TODAY it is not a shocking book . . . but it is a great novel of a woman at her best and at her worst . . . a novel which critics rank with Mr. Maugham's great book *Of Human Bondage*. New edition now ready.

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THE PHOENIX NEST

WE lately received a letter from Houghton Mifflin in regard to the Percy Reprints in general and to the complete and unexpurgated edition of the plays of *Sir George Etherege* in particular—though we already possess these cherished volumes. The opening quotation in the letter is still ringing in our ears. "'Prosperity plays queer tricks with dead men,' says *Ben Ray Redman*."

Prosperity plays queer tricks with dead men,
Says Ben Ray Redman;
There's no such man as John Keats' grandson,
Moans Harry Hansen;
There are silver mines in Cerro de Pasco,
Sighs Burton Rascoe;
The New-Style Aesthete I avoid,
Adds Ernest Boyd. . . .

Oh well, it *could* continue, but why? Yet that "Prosperity plays queer tricks, etc.," —that's the sort of thing that keeps going on and on round and round in your head in a devilish rhythm. . . .

Speaking of *Harry Hansen* who was recently speaking of *Stoddard King*, the Spokane verisifier, he recently spoke to this effect:

But his real fame is due to the fact that he wrote the lyrics for "It's a Long, Long Trail," the most popular song of the great war.

We turned this statement upside down and read it standing on our head, but it didn't seem to go any better. How *does* one write the "lyrics" for a popular song? . . .

We seem to be unbearably tuneful this morning. Scanning a Doubleday, Doran *Book Leaf*, a certain item passed through our reeling brain into this:

Edgar Wallace spent months in the Congo,
He—lived—once—with the tribe Mongo,
Passed in a steamer up the river Lulongo,
Yo, ho, ho, and a bottle of rum!

There's now a Religious Book of the Month Club, the judges being *Bishop O'Connell, Dr. S. Parkes Cadman, Dr. Mary E. Woolley, Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, and Bishop Brent.* So this is the time to announce that there is not going to be any Political Book of the Month Club, any Sports Book of the Month Club, any Psychic Book of the Month Club, any Fruit-Grower's Book of the Month Club, any Business Book of the Month Club, any Longshoreman's Book of the Month Club, or any Boudoir Book of the Month Club, —at least, not yet. . . .

Dear old "*Dionysius*" of the *Irish World and American Industrial Liberator* continues to send us marked clippings of his articles. This time his attack is directed against "*A. E.*" (George W. Russell) now in this country. He calls Russell "a genuine Cromwellian" and the foe of a united Ireland. "Dionysius" is a truly amazing phenomenon. He seems to be the most devoted enemy of the best in Irish letters that the most extreme bias and prejudice could desire. But to us the spectacle would be altogether absurd, if it were not somewhat shameful. For Ireland has some great literary figures today. . . .

An American Irish priest, by the way, *Father Whalen*, is called by his publishers, the B. Herder Book Company, the "Greatest Catholic Novelist in America Today," and he is advertised as publishing eight novels all within one year. Whee! That, indeed, *is* enterprise. But we very much doubt quality where there is such quantity. . . .

Andre Maurois's "Disraeli: A Picture of the Victorian Age," is just out through Appleton. *Hamish Miles*, we hear, has done an excellent translation. . . .

Robertus Love, the newly-appointed editor of the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, the Newspaper of the 49th State, does object to being addressed by publishers as *Miss* Robertus Love. Most recently a certain publishing firm, not content with this, added an "Esq." to the whole; whereat Robertus, rising in his wrath, ejaculated:

"Miss Robertus Love, Esquire"!
Wouldn't that inflame your ire?
I'll forgive the "Miss," so often
Thus they seek my sex to soften;
But I'm blasted if it's right
To be made Hermaphrodite! . . .
Blankaday and Blank and Co.
Surely ought by now to know
I, though 'umblest of the clan,
Am a fittin' fightin' MAN!

Carl Van Vechten's new novel, just completed, is entitled "Spider Boy: A Scenario for a Moving Picture." Alfred A. Knopf, Van Vechten's publisher, has scheduled the book for publication next August. . . .

The Carthaginian remarks that *O'Reilley* has been "very silent behind his whiskers of late." True; but if any of you others still remember O'Reilley, we are privileged to state that he is now in a Mouse House in Palermo, from which he sends the following quaint cable:

Hibernating without snow.—O'Reilley.

Carty Ranck, writing from Louisville, Kentucky, desires us to announce that he is at present contemplating an "Outline of Woman." "After all," he says, "theirs are the only outlines in which I am vitally interested. . . .

Ellen McIlvaine, late of Curtis Brown, is now a literary agent in her own right. She handles the work of such authors as *Thomas Boyd, James Norman Hall*, and *Ruth Suckow*. For the person who must be coaxed along in his writing and is rather lost in the mill of a big agency, hers should be excellent service. Her address is 3 East 27th Street and her 'phone Madison Square 4220. . . .

An interesting book on *Walt Whitman*, just about to be published by Stokes, is *Elizabeth Corbett's* "Walt." She tells the story of the great man by means of a series of dialogues compactly covering many years, with what might be called certain "stage directions" as introductory matter. In connection with this book, go back and read *Grant Overton's* ::The Answerer," published a few years ago, and take up also the more recent "The Magnificent Idler," by *Cameron Rogers*. It is extraordinary how Whitman's life has recently attracted novelists as well as biographers. . . .

We thank *Ben Blumenberg* for the information that a recent English catalogue contained the following item:

Nize Baby. Stories of low-life in an American apartment house.

Mr. Blumenberg remarks that this can only be matched by a note in the *Publisher's Weekly* of a couple of years ago:

Sherwood Anderson has written a new book, entitled, "Dark Laughter." The story deals with negro life in the South.

The daughter of *Robert Nathan* has written the following review of "The Woodcutter's House." It is reproduced *verbatim*:

Metable with her thursh colored hair. Musket slow and philosophil Joseph with his neat cut wood. Uncle Henry whose pride is to grow the biggest letuces in Wayne county. Prisey big fat and capable who has an eye for Joseph. All these are characters of fancy, some people like that kind of book. Other like exitement and adventure. I like my father books some time and sometimes I dont. Sometimes I think they are to sentimet much. Espelaly the conversation with the anamails.

Altogether I think this book is his best.

(Sgd) *Joan Nathan.*

Sylvia Satan sent us the following tinsel ornament for our Christmas tree, which we forgot to hang up. We do so now, with many thanks:

HOAR-FROST

A dewed, mercurial, magic-mesmered dust
Illumines stubble field and meadow river;
Sprayed slender trees film with the sparkling crust
By transfixed swamps where icy rushes quiver.

The sunrise road in drifting loop and gleam
Curves where the willows film in shrouded masses;
And pearled ravine and crystal copses stream
In shapen silverings along the grasses.

Till from a gate where ragged paths lead down
To factory chimneys' sullen sooted warning,
A workman starting for the dingy town
Moves through white-fronded fairyland of morning.

"Fun and Fantasy", by *E. H. Shepard* (Dutton), is a book of drawings that many will delight in. *A. A. Milne* writes an introduction to it. Shepard has become widely known as Milne's artist collaborator. Milne says in part:

Indeed our names have been associated on so many title pages that I am beginning to wonder which of us is which. . . . . Perhaps this will be a good place in which to tell the story of how I discovered him. It is short, but interesting. In those early days before the war, when he was making his first tentative pictures for *Punch*, I used to say to F. H. Townsend, the Art Editor, on the occasion of each new Shepard drawing, 'What on earth do you see in this man? He's perfectly hopeless,' and Townsend would say complacently, 'You wait.' So I waited. That is the end of the story, which is shorter and less interesting that I thought it was going to be. For it looks now as if the discovery had been somebody else's. Were those early drawings included in his book 'Fun and Fantasy,' we should know definitely whether Townsend was a man of remarkable insight, or whether I was just an ordinary fool. In their absence we may assume fairly safely that he was something of the one, and I more than a little of the other.

We may, Mr. Milne. It rather disappoints us that you talk so constantly of yourself in introducing this work. We knew of Shepard's drawings at least as long as we knew about you. And at that time we didn't think your own work was uproariously wonderful. Both of you have now accomplished a good deal. But we continue to admire Mr. Shepard for his own sake, and we can easily tell you two apart. . . .

Old *John Mistletoe* writes us from Villa Lacustrina, Lake Capstick, that he is now perfectly positive that "*S. S. Van Dine*" is in reality *Willard Huntington Wright;* and, if you want more internal evidence than a study of the predilections of Van Dine's esthetic detective, Philo Vance, look at Van Dine's initials, says old John. They are S. S., aren't they? Well, of course that stands for *Smart Set*,—and wasn't it Willard Huntington Wright who was one of the last successful editors of the old *Smart Set?* Q. E. D. . . .

Well,

Adieu, adieu, kind friends, adieu,
Adieu, adieu,
We can—no longer—stay with you, stay with you. . . .

THE PHŒNICIAN.

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THIS year marks the beginning of the second century of the familiar Baedeker guide-books, the first of which was printed by Karl Baedeker at Coblenz. The family was one of printers from the Diedrich Baedeker of 1680—and the line is still extant, and publishing guide-books, in the persons of Hans and Ernst, although the business was removed years ago to Leipsiz. The original Karl was a man of meticulous accuracy and persistent application—it is told of him that he spent over thirteen hours on two consecutive days listing and describing the position of the graves in the cemetery of Père Lachaise. But the result of all this care over details made the fame of Baedeker and the guide-books. Our own automobile guide-books are perhaps the worst in the world, partly because of the sketchy way in which they are prepared, and more because of the quite insufferable way in which advertisements are admitted to their pages. No advertisement ever appears in a Baedeker, and one has confidence, if not in its judgments, at least in its honesty. Perhaps what American guide-books lack is not so much honesty—although "he who pays the piper may call the tune"—as intelligence. No more annoying books of reference exist than our guidebooks, and it has always seemed to me that it is because their publishers felt a quite unnecessary obligation to pander to every possible advertiser. We salute the finest of guide-books, and wish the Messrs. Baedeker another century of usefulness to the traveler.

The second number of "Arts et Métiers Typographiques" has just come from Paris. Our client, The Compleat Collector, will find it interesting in many ways. The first item may be the wood engraving from Soviet Russia, skilful work of a sort similar to some modern French work, but with its own quality of design and execution. Then there is a bibliographical note on the printing of the Ourdy edition of La Fontaine's "Fables," articles on color heliotypes (with two illustrations), on Eugene Delacroix's work as an illustrator, on Fernand Simeon as painter and engraver, on book-covers, etc.

This magazine represents in its illustrations some of the best of modern French printing, and in its typography, the worst. An astonishing letter-head, set in a style to make even dabblers in the most *outré* manner sit up and take notice; wiry type printed on highly coated paper; a Matisse finely reproduced in color; an atrocious new type-face quaintly named "Le Dorique;" these are a few of the offerings. The baneful influence of the Didots and of the eighteenth century still obsesses the French typographer. I have a panicky feeling whenever I open a new specimen of French printing. But I always open it.

One of the smaller but more cherished items for the collector has just come to hand in the New Year greeting from the Merrymount Press, Boston. For many years now Mr. Ruzicka has cut a wood block in colors, illustrating some scene in or around Boston. One of the best was a view of Camp Devens, issued in 1918. The present picture, for 1928, shows "A view of Gore Hall and the Weeks Memorial Bridge, Cambridge," a representative piece of work by the foremost American wood engraver.

The Phoenix Nest being temporarily unguarded, the other day I pilfered it of Covici's recent publication, "The Secret History of Procopius," for several reasons. After reading it I am not at all envious of Gibbon's enthusiasm—but surely he never read it in such a setting as has been given to it in this volume. The type is a new face developed by Mr. Macmurtrie, and at first look one should hate it, for it is as primitive in feeling as even a Phœnician could ask for. It is a blunt, ungainly face, large and awkward: but somehow as I read I felt that perhaps for the sordid story of Justinian and Theodora and their lawless performances, it was an appropriate typographical dress. It at least doesn't suffer from that sin of type design, "over-modelling."

The latest of the "éditions G. Govone" to come from Paris is a modern Bestiaire, with pictures by Simon Bussy and prose text by Francis de Miomandre. Like so much contemporary French printing, it leaves one feeling that it is the work of people who are still a little beside themselves.

R.

The Compleat Collector.

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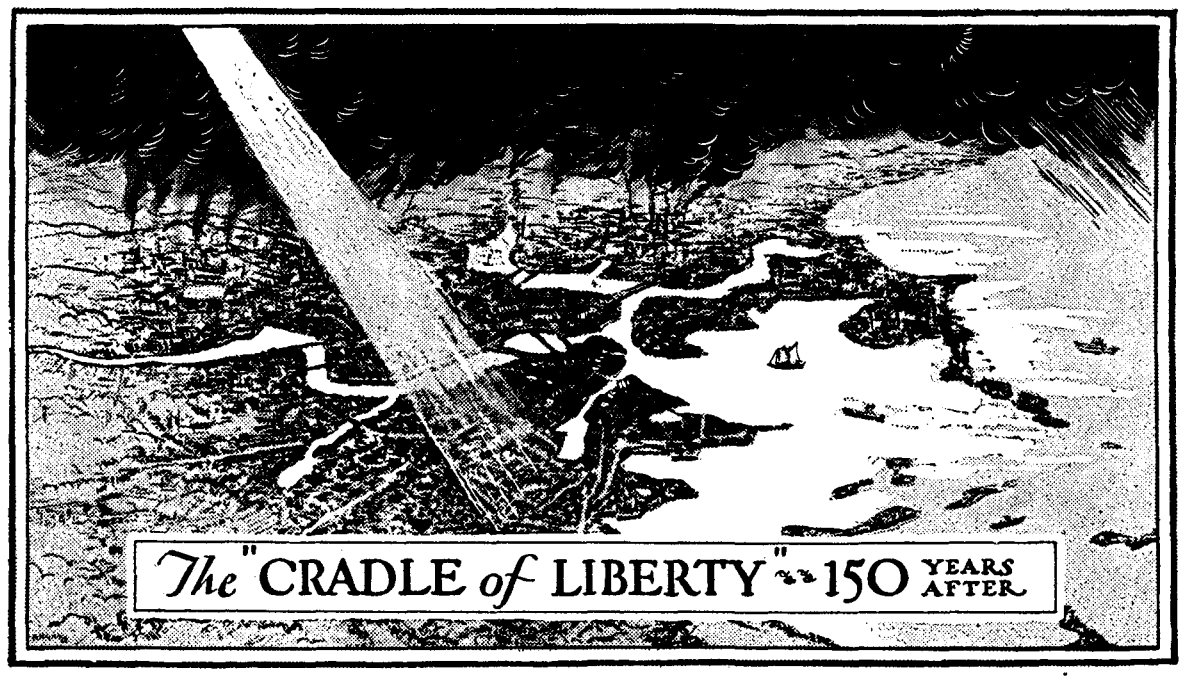

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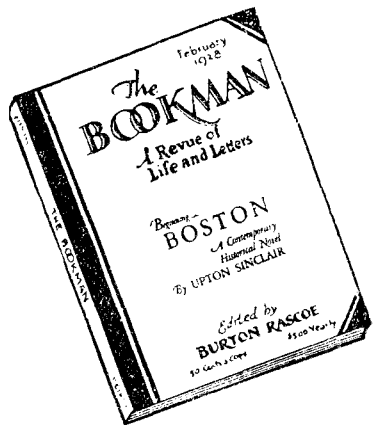

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